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Organizations I
Atheneum

ORGANIZATIONS

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THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM.

Its History, Interestingly Told by Miss Sarah F. Barnard, the Present Librarian.

The history of the Nantucket Atheneum can be divided into four eras: its beginning; its new birth from the ashes of the great fire of 1846; the rescue from its decadence during the civil war, the result of the successful fair in 1870; and its departure now, in the beginning of the new century, as a Free Public Library. It seems fitting at this time to renew its early history, that the present generation may realize the debt it owes to its founders, and that the few who are left that were identified with its early days, may, we trust, derive pleasure from its reminiscences:

From records of Nantucket Atheneum we find the origin of the library was as follows: In 1820, seven young men of Nantucket, viz., David Joy, Peleg Mitchell, Daniel P. Macy, John H. Coffin, Gideon Swain, Edward C. Hussey and George Fitch, associated themselves under the name of the "Nantucket Mechanics' Social Library Association." They had only twenty-six (26) volumes when they started the library. In 1823 another society was formed and named the "Columbian Library Society." In 1827 the two societies united, and the new society was called the "United Library Association." In 1833, two of its members, David Joy and Charles G. Coffin, bought a piece of land on Main street (where the house of the late Henry Coffin now stands) for \$1,800, which they gave to the society, on condition they would raise \$3,500, and build a brick building suitable for a library room, lecture room and museum.

They raised \$4,200, each subscriber of \$10 having an equal right with all other donors. The lot of land proved to be too small, and they exchanged with the proprietors of the Universalist Church, corner of Federal and Pearl streets, and fitted that building to answer the requirements, and in 1834 the society was incorporated as the Nantucket Atheneum. The building contained a convenient lecture room which would accommodate an audience of about four hundred and fifty persons, a library-room, a spacious room for curiosities, and a committee-room. This building, with its entire contents, was destroyed during the great fire of July 13, 1846. The library at that time contained 3,200 volumes, and many documents of inestimable value pertaining to the early settlement of the island. A printed catalogue of the library, made by the librarian, Miss Maria Mitchell, has been preserved. All the records were destroyed previous to 1847. Miss R. A. Gardner, the present efficient recording secretary of the Atheneum, has kindly copied from the records, the

report of the Examining Committee of Jan. 4, 1847, which is of special interest:

Report of the Examining Committee of the Nantucket Atheneum, January 4th, 1847.

1846-1847.

The undersigned committee, appointed in conformity with Article xxiv of the By-Laws of the Nantucket Atheneum "to examine the library and report annually to the proprietors on its condition, and all other concerns of the institution, except such as belong to the department of the treasurer," come before the proprietors at this annual meeting under peculiar and extraordinary circumstances. By the report of the last year's committee, the Atheneum was shown to be in a very flourishing condition. A neat and commodious building, containing a large and increasing library, documents of inestimable value pertaining to the early settlement of our island—a rare collection of curiosities of Nature and art (the works of man in his most barbarous as well as most civilized state) and cabinets of coins, minerals, shells, etc., that had been obtained at great expense of time and money, and presented to the Atheneum by liberal individuals; the whole forming a collection the like of which will probably never again be gathered together in this place.

This institution, in all its departments the pride and cherished object of our citizens, diffusing its benefits which were powerfully felt and acknowledged by our whole community, continued in this prosperous condition about one half of the past year, and the trustees and proprietors looked forward to its lasting and increasing usefulness; when, in a moment, almost, a pile of smouldering ruins alone designated the spot on which stood our famed and much-prized Atheneum.

On the night of the 13th of July, the building with its valuable library, records and documents, its cabinets of curiosities, and everything appertaining, was entirely consumed by the dreadful fire which also destroyed so large a portion of our town.

From the librarian, Miss Maria Mitchell, to whom we are indebted for all the information comprised in this report, we learn that "at the commencement of the past year the library of the Atheneum contained 3200 volumes. Five years previous, the books had been arranged and re-catalogued according to their subjects, and the subsequent purchases, though small, had steadily improved the character of each department. The Historical especially was becoming of very great value. It numbered about five hundred volumes, some of the best of which were recent additions. The departments of Biography and Travels were large; those of Physical Science and Natural History small, but of great value."

This information of the library and museum was given by the librarian, Miss Maria Mitchell:

"The museum, though not large, was exceedingly valuable, and comprised a larger collection of its kind than perhaps any in the country. The additions for some years had been small. It contained the beginnings of what was hoped would become extensive. There were small collections in Mineralogy, Ichthyology, Ornithology and Entomology, valuable Conchological cabinets, and a great variety of arms, domestic utensils and other implements from Polynesian Islands. These were every day becoming more rare and curious as the barbarous habits of the islanders disappeared before the advancing light of civilization. The museum also contained a large collection of coins of different countries, some of them of great antiquity. This entire department had been recently rearranged (by Miss Mitchell) and a catalogue of every article in the museum, with the name of the donor, and concise historical information relating to it, was in course of preparation. Great labour had been bestowed upon this; it had reached 120 folio pages, and the material was prepared for as many more.

On the night of the 13th of July, every effort was made to save the contents of the Atheneum, and too much praise can hardly

be awarded to those who used such great exertions to preserve what they could from the devouring element; neither does it detract from the credit due to those who laboured in removing the articles that their efforts were of little avail. Books, pictures and busts were removed from the library room, and were overtaken and destroyed by the fire when they were supposed to be in a place of safety. The portrait of Professor Silliman, which was painted by the late Prof. Morse, inventor of the electric telegraph, and a few books were all that was saved—about 130 volumes—most of them at the time in the hands of proprietors and out of the library have been recovered, nearly half of which are odd volumes. It is not known that anything was taken from the museum. About 250 coins and a few reliques from the ruined cities of Europe were picked up among the ashes and are little injured.

The destruction of this library, and the loss at the same time of that of the Coffin School, and of many private libraries, left the inhabitants of the island more destitute of reading resources than ever before. The circumstances called for some unusual exertion. The proprietors, though cast down were not destroyed, and at an early day a meeting was called and they resolved that the Atheneum should again rise in beauty and loveliness from its ashes. The money to be received from the insurance on the building was appropriated for the construc-

tion of a new one; a building committee was appointed to go on and erect a building, agreeable to a proposed plan, a report from whom will probably be made to you at this meeting. The trustees were requested to use their exertions to procure the foundation for a library, and at their suggestion the president of the institution, William Mitchell, prepared circulars, originally designed to be addressed to similar institutions, asking of them their duplicate volumes, and such other aid as they were willing to bestow. Certain gentlemen of Boston, to whom this circular was submitted, advised that individuals as well as institutions should be addressed. Their advice was followed, and the result has shown its wisdom.

Of the institutions addressed, only one, the Young Men's Institution of Hartford, has yet sent any books. Efforts were made by some members of the Providence Atheneum to procure a vote of a committee to whom the subject was referred, giving their duplicate volumes to the Nantucket Atheneum, but the committee was equally divided on its constitutionality. The American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Atheneum sent letters of sympathy. The call upon individuals was immediately and generously answered. One hundred and seventy volumes from Messrs. Little and Brown, (among them the London Encyclopaedia), and one hundred dollars from Amos Lawrence, Esq., of Boston, were received the first week. A few weeks later the sale of the rich and extensive library of the late John Pickering afforded an excellent opportunity to add to the value of public or private collections. Citizens of Boston, who are unwilling to have a public appearance of their names, availed themselves of this, and collecting the sum of seven hundred dollars, purchased and forwarded to the Nantucket Atheneum about 800 volumes. This collection contained perfect sets of the Edinburgh, London Quarterly, and North American Reviews, one hundred volumes of Standard Historical Works, valuable works in ancient and modern languages, and some law books. A large donation has also been received from Hon. Samuel A. Eliot of Boston, containing a set of the British Poets, 42 vols., 18 mo., and Dodsley's Annual Register, in 71 octavo volumes. Smaller, but valuable donations have been received from many others. From Ticknor & Co., of Boston, 44 vols.; from Edward Everett, 39 vols.; two daily and two weekly papers are forwarded to the Atheneum by Mr. Everett on the day after their publication; from C. P. Curtis, of Boston, 31 vols., and the unbound number of two foreign Reviews; from Wiley & Putnam, of New York, their library of choice reading in 29 vols.; from Rev. Alex. Young, of Boston, 23 vols., containing works of Upham, Sparks and Noyes; from Newman & Co., New York, 11 vols., among them Cudworth's Intellectual System of the Universe; from J. C. Park, of Boston, 4 octavo volumes, among them De Tocqueville's Democracy of America; from N. L. Bowditch, the Mechanique Celeste; from T. N. Marvin, of Boston, 1 vol. 8 vo; from Rev. Mr. Hall, of Providence, 10 volumes and pamphlets; from Dr. J. C. Warren, Boston, 2 vols.; from Mrs. George Larned, of Providence, 20 volumes; from Mrs. Lucretia Mott, of Philadelphia, 6 volumes; from other ladies 16 volumes, and 4 from Pan Mitchell, Esq.

With the donations made by the proprietors, the number of books is nearly 1600 volumes. All of them are good works; most of them are in good condition, and very few duplicates.

Donations from proprietors and others: From Robert M. Joy, 33 vols.; Miss Rebecca Ann Folger, 24 vols. and pamphlets; Edward G. Kelley, 19 volumes and collection of minerals; John W. Barrett, 12 vols.; Eben Coleman, 11 vols.; Frederick Vinton, 11 vols.; Augustus Morse, 7 vols.; George Parker, 6 vols.; Matthew Crosby, 5 vols.; David Mitchell, 5 vols.; Charles Mitchell, 4 vols.; William H. Geary, 4 vols.; Miss Sarah C. Easton, 2 vols.; George Cobb, 1 vol.; Frederick W. Mitchell, 9 vols."

The undersigned would congratulate the proprietors on the favorable commencement of their Atheneum, and they would recommend that energetic measures be taken to carry forward the undertaking. They would suggest the appointment of a committee to solicit donations in behalf of the institution; they doubt not that there are many among the proprietors who have the ability and the disposition to aid in the reestablishment. They would also suggest the expediency of creating 50 additional shares, at a price not less than \$5 per share, for the purpose of completing the building and increasing the library.

GEORGE H. FOLGER,
EDWARD G. KELLEY,
JOSEPH MITCHELL,
EBEN COLEMAN,
Examining Committee.
Nantucket, Jan. 4, 1847.

Maria Mitchell - 1836 - 1856
Sarah F. Barnard - 1856 - 1905
Clara Parker - 1905 - 1956

over

FROM 1847 TO 1900.

The present building was completed and the library, containing 1600 volumes, opened to the public, Feb. 1, 1847. A committee of the proprietors was appointed to solicit contributions for the museum, and their call was generously responded to. Capt. Robert M. Joy presented a large and rare collection of shells; Mr. Edward G. Kelley a cabinet of several hundred specimens of minerals. These with many other donations, formed the nucleus of the present attractive collection, which is yearly increased by contributions from persons interested in its maintenance. The new building was similar in architectural design to the old one, as can be seen by a pen and ink sketch by Samuel H. Jenks, in the library room. An important change in the internal arrangement, was having the library and museum on the lower floor, and the lecture room on the floor above.

At the annual meeting, Jan. 4, 1847, the following officers were elected: President, William Mitchell; Vice-president, Thomas Macy; Treasurer, Joseph Mitchell; Corresponding Sec'y, Augustus Morse; Recording Sec'y, Henry C. Worth; Trustees, Edward G. Kelley, Samuel B. Tuck, Eben Coleman, Charles Bunker, George H. Folger.

As will be seen by the report of examining committee of January, 1847, the new library had a solid foundation of valuable books. It is the cause of frequent comment from the summer visitor that books of such calibre are found in the library in "far-away Nantucket." The library was fortunate in its librarian, Maria Mitchell, who was always alive to its interests, and under whose able administration a high standard was maintained. In June, 1848, a fair was held in the building called the Atheneum Bazaar, which realized the sum of \$888.

The prosperity of the Atheneum, as well as the island was destined to be changed in a few years, by two causes, almost as serious in their results as the "Great Fire." The first was the large exodus from our town, upon the discovery of gold in California, in 1849. The other was the Civil War. For some years after the war, the finances of the Atheneum were much impaired. In 1870, through the exertions of the trustees, (Alfred Macy being president at that time) and the generous assistance of the proprietors and town's people, an extensive fair was held in the building, during the month of August, which proved a great success, the net proceeds of which were \$3,000. The building was put in excellent order, the library replenished, and the Atheneum was on a solid basis financially. It has also been enriched by several bequests.

From William Hadwen..... \$2,000
" Mrs. Priscilla Wyer..... 500
" David Joy..... 1,000
" George B. Upton..... 1,000
" Mrs. Eliza C. Nevins..... 2,000
" Frederick C. Sanford..... 20,000
" Maria Mitchell Memorial Fund 500

In 1883 the library had increased to 7,000 volumes, and had outgrown its accommodations. It was enlarged by taking in the west room for a reading room, with shelves and alcoves for the surplus books. The books were rearranged and classified and a catalogue printed.

The library is still growing, and is now in a very prosperous condition. Last year, in December, a valuable donation of books and pictures was received (a bequest from the late Frederick C. Sanford) of 1,000 books and 52 pictures. The books are a donation of which any library might well be proud. Most of them are standard works, and many are in expensive, handsome bindings, which are an ornament to the room.

Owing to this large addition, every available space has been used for shelving the books. The Sanford library has been given a conspicuous place in the library room proper, and shelves made in the corridor for the books which were removed to make place for the more desirable acquisition. Before many years the whole lower floor will be needed for the library.

In connection with the good results of the library, the annual course of Atheneum Lectures must not be forgotten. In the forties and fifties, the lecture was a popular form of intellectual entertainment, and the thought of the finest minds of the age was spoken from the lecture platform. The proprietors of the Atheneum, for the low price of one dollar a ticket, for the winter's course of lectures, had an opportunity of listening to many of the prominent men of the day. Many of us can recall with pleasure the wonderfully interesting talks of Prof. Silliman in the early days of Geology; the glowing words of John Pierpont, Theodore Parker and Thos. Starr King; the wise oracles of Ralph Waldo Emerson; the pure English and polished sentences of William R. Alger; the eloquence of Wendell Phillips and George William Curtis; the graceful "Howodji;" the witty John G. Saxe; Quaint Horace Greely, and many others whose names I do not recall.

Among the valuable donations to the library, one from Mrs. David Joy must not be omitted. One of the unsparable losses to the library in the fire of 1846 was a set of Audobon's Birds of America, the folio edition, the Atheneum being among the subscribers for the great work. After Mr. David Joy's death, Mrs. Joy presented to the library her husband's set, which was the octavo size. The books were in excellent condition, bound in Russia. Mrs. Joy also had a neat cabinet made to preserve the books, and gave with the same a marble bracket to hold the cabinet.

During the year 1899 a radical change was made in the library room. The alcove arrangement of the books was found inadequate for their proper classification, owing to the steady growth of the library, and the old alcoves were replaced by modern steel stacks, with adjustable shelves, which give better room, more light and improve the general appearance of the room. These stacks are of the most modern pattern, and were furnished by the Library Bureau, Boston. A Card Catalogue has also been made, and the books rearranged and re-catalogued. The trustees were fortunate to secure the services of Mrs. S. A. C. Bond, of Boston, an expert in the work of cataloguing libraries, who came highly recommended. The trustees purchased a first-class

Hammond type-writer, and Misses Mary C. Defriez and Clara Parker rendered efficient aid to Mrs. Bond with the same, and January 1, 1900, 10,500 cards had been type-written and arranged systematically in the case. This case is a handsome piece of furniture made expressly for the library at the Library Bureau, and serves as a memorial to the late Mrs. Eliza S. Nevins, from whose generous bequest to the Atheneum the improvements have been made.

April 3, 1900. The Nantucket Atheneum Library opened its doors to the public, as a Free Public Library.

The several presidents of the institution and their terms of office are given below:

William Mitchell—1846. Resigned 1st mo., 5th, 1852.
George Howland Folger—1852-53.
Edward G. Kelley—1854-58.
Alfred Macy—1859-72.
Charles G. Coffin—1873-82.
Timothy W. Calder—1883-88.
Thaddeus C. Defriez—1889-1900.

The Nantucket Atheneum has ever been a power for good in our community, whose influence has not been confined to the proprietors alone, but has been far-reaching in its effects. By wise and judicious management, it has been carried safely through the "storm and stress" into peaceful waters, and the future has a hopeful outlook. We trust its many friends and patrons will still extend their generous support; and that in the near future, our present dream of a suitable fire-proof building for the better preservation of the library and museum may be realized.

The day is not far distant when we who have had its interests so near our hearts, must trim our sails for the voyage to the "undiscovered country," beyond this earthly bourne, but we know that when the time comes for us to lay down the pleasant burden, there will be willing hearts and hands to carry on the good work. May its sons and daughters still gather at the annual meetings where all have equal rights, and every proprietor, regardless of sex, can cast his or her vote for the best interests of the institution. Thus facing the century, we leave the Nantucket Atheneum.

"Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our
tears;
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—Are all with thee."

SARAH F. BARNARD.

April 10, 1900.

No Free Library.

At a special meeting of the shareholders of the Atheneum, Monday evening, the question of appointing a committee to consult with the town's committee, relative to making the Atheneum a free public library, was discussed at some length. There were forty-five shares represented, and the vote upon the question stood 43 against raising the committee and 2 in favor.

The matter of acceptance of the compromise offered by the contestants of the will of the late Charlotte A. J. Mann, was also under discussion, the vote being in favor of compromising. The Atheneum, it will be remembered, is one of the legatees under the will.

APR 28 1902

Annual Meeting Proprietors Nantucket Atheneum.

The annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum was held Thursday evening at the Library, with fifteen Proprietors present. Dr. William E. Gardner, Vice-President, presided in the absence of President Harry M. Harps, who is hospitalized in Boston.

Following the reports of the officers, Miss Clara Parker's report as Librarian was read by Miss Grace Brown Gardner in the absence of Miss Parker, who is confined to her home with a cold.

The following officers were re-elected for the ensuing year; President, Harry M. Harps; Vice-President, William E. Gardner; Recording Secretary, Grace Brown Gardner; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams; Treasurer, Lewis B. Jelleme; Trustees: William C. Brock, Peter M. Hussey, Paul M. Frye, Henry B. Coleman, and Miss Clara Parker.

A committee consisting of Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, chairman, William C. Brock, and Mrs. M. Turner Blackshaw, was appointed to revise the By-Laws of the Corporation.

Annual Meeting of Proprietors of Nantucket Atheneum.

The annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum, originally scheduled for Thursday evening, Jan. 10, was held on Monday evening, Jan. 14, at the Library, having been postponed because of the storm on the previous date.

The reports of the officers were read and approved and the report of the Librarian, Miss Clara Parker, was presented and is printed here-with.

The officers, elected for the ensuing year, are as follows: president, Harry M. Harps; vice-president, Dr. William E. Gardner; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams; recording secretary, Miss Grace Brown Gardner; treasurer, Lewis B. Jelleme; trustees, Miss Clara Parker, William C. Brock, Peter M. Hussey, Paul M. Frye, and Henry B. Coleman.

Report of Librarian

Number of books circulated during the year	22,493
Average number per month	1,791
Average number per week	453
Number of volumes of nonfiction circulated	5,928
Number of volumes of fiction circulated	16,565
Number of volumes loaned to residents	15,179
Number of volumes loaned to nonresidents	7,314
Number of volumes added to library	1,182
Number of volumes donated	838
Number of volumes discarded	57
Number of volumes rebound	193
Total number of volumes in library	49,886
Membership cards issued to residents	94
Membership cards issued to nonresidents	1,225
Magazines and newspapers used in library	61
Magazines and newspapers donated	21
Pamphlets donated	94
Cards typed for the catalogue	1,619

The Rotary Club of Nantucket has given a subscription to their magazine, "The Rotarian". "The American Heritage" has also been given by a friend of the library. For many years the Island Service Company has furnished the library with "The American Builder."

Mrs. John Kieran gave a collection of new copies of forty-five books for the children and the library has also purchased others.

The library has been able to purchase a set of the newest edition of Encyclopedia Britannica and has also ordered a set of The World Book Encyclopedia which it is hoped will arrive in the very near future.

The Reading Room has been furnished with new chairs. These are solid wood, of the Windsor style. They are very comfortable and are expected to remain in good condition much longer than the cane seated ones that were formerly in use. The Reading Room table has also been improved by removing all of the hand carved initials which were very numerous. After this work, which was done by some of the boys of the woodworking class at the Coffin School, it has received coats of stain and varnish giving it a much better appearance.

Respectfully submitted,
Clara Parker, Librarian

Nantucket's Atheneum History

From The Library Journal

The Nantucket Atheneum, incorporated in 1834, represents the merger of two earlier libraries — the first of which was established in 1820. Miss Maria Mitchell, the astronomer, was the first librarian. During the first two decades of its existence, the library acquired a large collection of books and manuscripts. During the "Great Fire" of 1846, the library with all its contents was completely destroyed.

An appeal to "America" for aid brought immediate response from nearly every state in the Union. In six months a new building, in the Greek Revival style, was opened to the public and dedicated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in an impressive ceremony.

Then began a period of great cultural activity. Under Maria Mitchell's able direction, the library expanded in size and prestige. In the Great Hall on the second floor the important men of the day delivered lectures; Thoreau, Channing, Greeley, Audubon, Agassiz and Daniel Webster among others. Lyceum lectures were also conducted and societies such as the Nantucket Philosophical Institute met here to explore the higher levels of culture.

In 1856 Miss Mitchell was succeeded by Sarah Barnard who served as librarian 50 years. She was followed by Miss Clara Parker in 1906 who also served 50 years. Through a fund drive begun in 1955, the library was completely restored and remodeled. On the second floor the "Great Hall" was opened as a Reading Room. The library's Chinese paintings and ship pictures, brought back from China on the clipper ships, hang in this hall.

The Atheneum's proprietors are particularly proud of the library's collections of books on Nantucket, whaling, and Quakerism. Of great importance are the works dealing with early voyages and travels. This collection includes a set of Hakluyt Society publications. The library contains about 45,000 volumes. In its registration files are names from 31 states as well as Canada and England. Since Nantucket is currently celebrating its 300th anniversary, the Atheneum extends a cordial welcome to all its library friends.

Mrs. Irene J. Smith, Librarian at the Atheneum since 1956, served previously as Librarian of the Ames Free Library, Easton, Massachusetts. Prior to that she was Reference Assistant at the City Library Association, Springfield, Mass., and Reference Librarian at the Hartford, Conn., Public Library. She obtained her professional training in the City Library Training School, Springfield, Mass. For six years she edited the Connecticut Library Association Bulletin, and was also president of the Old Colony Library Club in southeastern Massachusetts.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

BY PARTICULAR REQUEST.



ATHENÆUM HALL.

THIS FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 27TH.

PIKE'S STAR TRouPE

IN ONE OF THEIR
CLASSICAL, COMICAL, COSTUME
CONCERTS

AND

Ethiopian Parlor Entertainments,
With a Host of Novelties.

Tickets only 15 cents — To be had at the Door. Doors open at 7 1-2 o'clock. Concert to commence at 8 1-4. No postponement.

1860

For the Inquirer.

A SPLENDID DONATION TO THE ATHENEUM.

Mr. J. S. Hathaway has presented the Atheneum a beautiful copy of Stewart's original portrait of Washington. It is finely executed, and has been pronounced by good judges in Boston, to be equal to any copy. It is difficult to fix a value to such a work, but it certainly cannot be estimated at less than one hundred dollars. The portrait has been placed in the library room of the Atheneum, where it can be seen by all who desire.

Stewart's original portrait of Washington belongs to the Boston Atheneum, and no copy is allowed to be taken, except it is to be presented to some literary institution.

Mr. Hathaway's friends will be gratified to learn that he intends to leave for Europe the present season, where he will remain about two years.

K.

Mar. 17, 1848

A CARD.

At a Meeting of the Trustees of the Atheneum on Monday evening, the 10th inst., James M. Bunker, Esq. offered the following Resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved — That the Trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum highly appreciate the valuable and generous services of those ladies and gentlemen of this town, who have recently planned and successfully carried through "The Entertainments," which have largely contributed both to the credit and the funds of the Institution: and the Trustees deem this, their first Quarterly Meeting, the most fitting, as it is the earliest opportunity presented to express their consideration of those services.

J14 WM. H. WAITT, Secy.

1859

ENTERTAINMENTS.—Miss Priscilla C. Morris will give an entertainment at Atheneum Hall, on Tuesday evening next, and will be assisted by some of the best talent in town. We have no doubt but she will be greeted with a full house.

Mr. William Ethelbert Eastty, of London, will give a reading in Atheneum Hall, on Thursday evening next. Mr. Eastty is highly spoken of by the press of the country, by which he is pronounced an unrivaled delineator of Dickens. Admission, 15 cents; children, 10 cents.

1898

Mar. 29, 1959

Famous Morse Portrait Sold by Atheneum.

Many islanders and summer visitors are familiar with the large portrait which, for many years, hung over the magazine section in the Nantucket Atheneum. It was a portrait of Professor Benjamin Silliman (1779-1864) of Yale, renowned American physicist, and it was painted by the famous Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph.

This week the Atheneum announced the sale of the portrait to an unknown purchaser, who, upon its acquisition, presented it to Yale University. The sale was arranged by William Harshe, of Chicago and New York, through the Babcock Galleries of New York. It is said that \$3,000 was the amount paid. A panel has been especially designed for the canvas in Silliman Hall, a new building to be opened at Yale University in the fall.

The canvas, 56 by 44 inches, was painted by Morse in 1824. Considered a fine example of the work of the inventor as an artist, it shows Professor Silliman in a black coat standing behind a marble-top table as though delivering a lecture. His left hand rests on some books, while his right holds a piece of mineral. Various other minerals are scattered on the table, and a red curtain at the left, and East Rock in New Haven, at the right, form the background.

Prof. Silliman, a native of North Stratford, Conn., became associated with Yale in 1804. He traveled extensively to study physical sciences. In 1818 he founded "The American Journal of Science and Arts", which he edited for twenty years. It was Prof. Silliman and Jeremiah Day who first aroused the interest of Samuel F. B. Morse in science—an interest which eventually led to the invention of the telegraph. Morse, who was born in Charlestown, Mass., in 1791, graduated from Yale in 1810.

After his graduation, Morse determined to become an artist. From 1811 to 1815 he studied painting in England, and on his return to this country began his career as a portrait painter. His portrait of Prof. Silliman, painted in 1824, was done in the full maturity of his skill. In that same year he made New York his headquarters, and was one of the organizers of the National Academy of Design, serving as its first president.

It was while returning from Europe in 1832, that Morse conceived the idea of the telegraph. Thereafter, as his absorption in science increased, his interest in art decreased.

In letters now owned by the Nantucket Atheneum, the Morse portrait was donated to the "Lyceum" by Prof. Silliman himself in July, 1847. Writing to William Mitchell, himself a well-known scientist and father of Maria Mitchell (then librarian), Prof. Silliman stated the portrait was considered a good likeness when painted in 1824, but that his family was not entirely pleased with it. In another letter, written in 1882 to Charles G. Coffin, Prof. Silliman asked for a loan of the portrait for a smaller copy.

The Passing of Miss Barnard.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

My Boston exchanges bear to me the sad tidings of the death of Miss Sarah F. Barnard, for so many years the devoted and efficient librarian at the Atheneum, and a woman whose friendship is a sweet remembrance to me. The report of her passing away carries me back to the time when she was appointed to the charge of the library. As you know, her immediate predecessor was Miss (afterwards professor) Maria Mitchell. It was my honor to have been assistant to Miss Mitchell when she resigned her position at the Atheneum. While under her direction I was busy in my leisure time while at the library in making up a card catalogue which consisted of a transcription of the title page of the book to specially prepared and ruled cards. I have often wondered what became of those cards, and whether the card catalogue so commonly used now, was original with Miss Mitchell. I was the connecting link between the administrations of Miss Mitchell and Miss Barnard. I believe at the mid-week session of the library I was for one afternoon in sole charge. Then came Miss Barnard, and I remember her from the first as a delightful friend, so gentle that one wondered almost whence would come the needed firmness to control the sometimes thoughtless ones who often gathered as much for the social meeting as for the literary errand, and, when occasion demanded, so firm that one almost wondered if she were indeed the sweet-tempered woman of so brief a time before. In the time I served under her as assistant I learned to respect and esteem her highly, and I have always highly prized the friendship of those days. You who have remained in Nantucket well know how devoted she has been to her work and how the library has thrived under her administration. For myself I know how patiently, uncomplainingly, almost smilingly she suffered, as, year in and year out, she gave her best efforts and her strength to the duties of her position. To me her passing away comes as the loss of a personal and valued friend. I shall miss her when I visit my old home, for I seldom went to Nantucket without calling to see her. It is perhaps but a feeble tribute that I bring to her worth as a woman and as a guide and help in my boyhood, but such as it is it is heartfelt and sincere.

Nantucket Jr.
Waltham, Mass., August 28, 1906.

Resigned.

At a meeting of the trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum on Monday evening, the resignation was received of Miss Sarah F. Barnard, the librarian of the institution, who has served in that capacity for fifty years, lacking a few months, and is unable to continue in service owing to ill health. The resignation was accepted with regret, and appropriate resolutions were passed showing the esteem in which Miss Barnard was held, and in appreciation of her long tenure of faithful service. By a unanimous vote she was made librarian emeritus.

Miss Clara Parker, who has served several years as Miss Barnard's assistant, was appointed to the position of librarian, and Miss Isabel Coffin was chosen assistant.

July 14, 1904

The History of Our Library.

The history of the Nantucket Atheneum can be divided into four eras: its beginning; its new birth from the ashes of the great fire of 1846; the rescue from its decadence during the Civil War; (the result of a successful fair in 1870); and its present era. We owe a great debt to its founders.

When the library was started in 1820 there were only 26 books. In 1847 there were 1,600 books.

The Nantucket Atheneum has ever been a power for good in our community, whose influence has not been confined to its proprietors alone, but has been far reaching in its effects. By wise and judicious management it has been carried safely through the "storm-stress" into peaceful waters.

In the fire of July 13, 1846, the building with its entire contents was destroyed. The library at that time contained 3,200 volumes.

On April 3, 1900, the Nantucket Atheneum opened its doors to the public, as a free Public Library.

In 1889 a valuable donation of books and pictures was given—1,000 books and 52 pictures. The books were a donation of which any library may have been proud.

The books are the cause of a frequent comment from the summer visitors—that books of such value are found in the library in "far away Nantucket".

We have books in very fine bindings which are kept in a separate collection, and collections of many hundreds of wild flowers that can be used for reference.

We now have 35,169 books in our library.

Rosamond Sykes.

March 21, 1936

ATHENEUM MUSEUM.

THE wonders contained in this Museum are many and varied, and include articles from all portions of the globe, both from the sea and land. Among the more prominent curiosities here on exhibition, are the mammoth Sperm Whale's Jaw, seventeen feet in length, models of the Camels formerly used to take loaded ships over the bar, and a correct painting of a Whaling Scene, which is rendered more interesting by the janitor's clear explanation. Not a visitor to the island should fail to stroll in among the curios.

The Museum is open from 8, A. M., to 5, P. M. Admission 15 cents. Parties desirous of entering in the evening, can do so on application to the subscriber.

JOSEPH S. SWAIN.

1820

See next
page

JUNE 22, 1940.

"Atheneum Museum."

While making repairs to the Atheneum Library this week, workmen uncovered an old sign which used to be hung on the outside of the building a half century ago. It advertised the "Atheneum Museum," a branch of the Nantucket institution which is today known only to those whose memories go back to the 1890's, when this branch of the Atheneum's activities was discontinued, and most of the collection was transferred to the newly organized Nantucket Historical Association.

The phraseology of the sign is well worth reprinting, running as follows:

ATHENEUM MUSEUM

The Atheneum Museum is now open to visitors in charge of

Mr. H. P. Clapp

who will be ready to explain its wonders to strangers, and answer all questions concerning the many curiosities on exhibition.

The Great Sperm Whale's Jaw seventeen feet long, in perfect condition, with all the teeth in place, is among the attractive features of the Museum. Also, a model of the famous "Camels," with a ship in their embrace, an interesting reminder of the palmy days of the Nantucket Whale-Fishery; and hundreds of strange things and objects of curious interest, forming a complete Cabinet of Wonders, both of sea and land, collected from nearly every part of the globe.

Admission 15 cents.

Hours of Exhibition: 9 a. m. to 1 p. m.
6:30 p. m. to 8 p. m.

H. P. Clapp,
43 Centre St., Nantucket, Mass.

The sign has been laid away and forgotten for forty-five years. Covered with dust, its old-fashioned lettering printed on cardboard, in turn tacked to a wooden board, it represented what was truly a "Cabinet of Wonders." The old-fashioned phraseology was not stretching the truth when it claimed the collection had come from all parts of the world because the exhibition featured the famous Wax Dauphin, brought from France in 1795 by a Captain Coffin; weapons and curios from cannibal islands in the South Seas; a desk made on Pitcairn Island; and many other unusual items—as well as the great sperm whale's jaw, which is now in the Whaling Museum.

The Atheneum's collection formed a valuable nucleus for the forming of a collection now featured in the Historical Association's Fair Street Building.

The sign was presented to Historical Association by the Atheneum.

April 20, 1870

NANTUCKET ATHENEUM.—A large and beautiful photograph of the present President of the Nantucket Atheneum, Charles G. Coffin, Esq., has, at the solicitation of the Trustees, been placed in the Library Room as a companion to that of Hon. David Joy, which already occupied a place there. Messrs. Coffin and Joy are two of the original founders of the Atheneum which was incorporated in 1834, and were among the most liberal donors to the fund. The two portraits are excellent likenesses, finished in the best style of the art, and are worthy the attention of every visitor to the Library.

Library Funds Wanted

The Atheneum Library needs money. If certain anticipated expenses occur, the money for them must be taken from the book fund. With more means, the work of the Library could be made more effective in many ways. For instance:

More books and magazines could be bought.

More magazines could be bound.

The Library could be opened a larger part of the time.

More effort could be made to distribute books, by establishing Branch Libraries, or by sending small Traveling Libraries out of town, etc.

Therefore the trustees solicit Gifts and Bequests for the improvement of the Library, calling attention to the fact that it not only serves the community in winter, but aims to meet the demands made by a large and cultured summer population.

Donations or bequests may be forwarded to ALBERT G. BROCK, Treas.

Jan. 10, 1914

\$10,000 to Atheneum And \$5,000 to Historical Association.

The will of the late William H. Swift, a native of Nantucket, who died at his home in Pittsfield, Mass., on the 10th of April, at the age of 82, was filed for probate on Monday last. The will leaves \$100,000 to Williams College, \$100,000 to the American Board of Foreign Missions and \$100,000 to the Pittsfield House of Mercy Hospital. These are the largest bequests, but there are a number of others of a public nature.

The Nantucket Atheneum is to receive \$10,000 and the Nantucket Historical Association \$5,000; The Pittsfield Y. M. C. A. will receive \$10,000, the Pittsfield Boys' Club \$10,000, the Berkshire Atheneum \$10,000, the Pittsfield First Congregational Church \$5,000, the Pittsfield Cemetery Association \$5,000.

All of these bequests are subject to life interests of Mrs. Swift, widow of the testator, and his two sisters, Misses Anne C. Swift and Caroline E. Swift, of Nantucket.

APR 10 1927

ATHENEUM.

THE annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum, stands adjourned until Monday evening, January 13th, at 6 o'clock.—At that time the officers for the current year will be chosen, and other business of vital importance to the Institution will be brought forward. The Ladies are invited to attend. *Per Order.*

A. WHITNEY, Sec'y.

Jan. 8, 1831--32.

The last signature of the Atheneum Catalogue (which is being printed at this office) will be put to press to-day, when it will be ready for the binder. The book will be of one hundred and fifty octavo pages, and will contain the names of the books alphabetically arranged, the authors similarly arranged with the works of each following the name, the number of book and alcove, a list of proprietors and subscribers, and the by-laws of the institution. It will prove a convenient and valuable volume for every patron of the library.

May 19, 1873

Recent Gifts to Library.

Within a short time the Atheneum Library has been the recipient of three gifts of very marked value. The first of these is a collection of books given by Edward B. Anderson, consisting of about 1,380 volumes, many of which deal with religious subjects. There are also sets of books by standard authors as well as many of miscellaneous character.

The second gift is the library of the late Rear-Admiral William Mayhew Folger and consists of approximately 2,600 volumes. This library covers quite a range of subjects; biographies, histories, books on the navy and diplomatic relations with foreign countries, encyclopedia and dictionary, music, foreign languages and a small amount of fiction.

The books in these collections are being catalogued and are being put into circulation as soon as they are ready.

The third gift is a very old and valuable grandfather clock, made by Thomas Wagstaffe, of London, dated 1765. This clock belonged to John Coleman and his wife Phebe (Swain) Coleman, and has been given to the Atheneum by their grand-daughter, Miss Annie B. Folger. It has been placed at the entrance to the reading room, where it attracts a great deal of attention.

Dec. 1, 1928

First Certificate of Atheneum.

Moses Joy has presented to the Nantucket Atheneum a rather interesting document, which has been suitably framed and given place in the library. It is the first certificate issued by the Atheneum when it was organized.

The certificate was issued by David Joy to his brother, Moses Joy, Jr., and it was first issued when the Atheneum was incorporated in 1834.

Moses Joy, who gave the paper to the Atheneum, is the third in line by that name.

APR 25 1928

A HANDBOME DONATION.—

We learn that Mrs. Charlotte A. Joy, who is now in town on a visit to her early home, has presented to the Nantucket Atheneum a complete copy of that splendid and elaborate work, Audubon's Birds of America, which was formerly the property of her late husband, Hon. David Joy. It will be placed in a handsome case, and will be open to inspection at the library room, but not to be taken out of the building. This work of Audubon is one of rare beauty, the illustrations being in the highest style of art; and being expensive, only a small number of copies were published. The gift will also have peculiarly interesting associations clinging to it, as having belonged to one who took so deep an interest in our Atheneum, as evinced by his liberality to the Institution during his life, and also by a noble bequest in his last will. Thousands who have never had an opportunity to see this beautiful edition of Audubon will now be able to do so, with a feeling of gratitude to the late Mr. Joy and to his widow.

W. C. K. 1928

Summer Amusements.

Mr. Editor:

A brief outline of the policy of the Atheneum Hall, as conducted under the lease given me by the trustees of the Atheneum, may be of interest. Realizing that, from the semi-educational character of the institution, there was a trust imposed as well as a business transaction entered into, it has been the aim of the management to book attractions, the character of which shall not be wholly at variance with the purposes of Nantucket's most popular institution. As a result only entertainments of a high order of excellence have been engaged, and while it would perhaps be stretching the facts to call them educational, yet in no case will attendance at the hall result in aught but wholesome enjoyment.

Music of the better class will be furnished by the Boston Lyric Male Quartet, and by the famous Temple Quartet. Of a lighter order, the Euterpe and Oxford Musical clubs, and the Brown University boys will furnish their inimitable programs. Of artistic and dramatic excellence will be found the comedies and character sketches of Grilley and Elliott, while the reading of Rostand's immortal "Cyrano de Bergerac" by the latter will be a treat rarely afforded towns of this size. For evenings that will interest and amuse, and perhaps instruct, the illusions of Prof. Leroy and the motion pictures of the cinematograph will be offered. The latter machine, direct from the Eden Musee, New York, will show eighty pictures in motion, giving scenes of the late war, some wonderful scenic views, and many events of world-wide interest.

Realizing that all tastes deserve attention, there have been booked vaudeville combinations, minstrel companies, etc., all of a high character. The management pledges itself that no act shall be offensive to the most refined. No act will be allowed to go on that is capable of a double meaning, and the improvised, incapable companies which in some previous instances have by misrepresentation broken faith with the public, will be rigidly barred out.

Every attraction will be advertised exactly as it is, and no exaggeration will be intentionally allowed. The patrons of the house can be assured in every case that they will get what they pay for, and that nothing will be left undone to ensure their comfort. Trusting that the effort to give Nantucket first-class amusements may meet with the approval of the public, I am respectfully,

ARTHUR C. WYER, Mgr.

June 1, 1899

Proposition for Compromise.

In the matter of appeal by Mrs. Mary C. Sanford, from the allowance of the will of her husband, the late F. C. Sanford, a proposition for a compromise has been offered by Mr. Scott, the executor, said to be satisfactory to the widow. The proposition is that instead of the distribution as provided by will, the legatees accept the following.

\$6,000 to certain legatees named.
50,000 to Mrs. Scott absolutely.
23,000 to Unitarian Society, absolutely.
23,000 to the Town of Nantucket, absolutely.
26,000 to the Atheneum. The library and pictures to remain in Mrs. Sanford's house until her decease.

By this plan it is claimed if all parties in interest consent, all risk of loss and expense will be saved, the residuary legatees will have the amounts set apart at once, and the widow and daughter will be enabled to enjoy their proportions free from trusteeships.

At a meeting of the trustees of the Atheneum, held Monday evening, it was unanimously voted to accept the proposition, subject to ratification by the proprietors at the annual meeting. As the case does not come before the court until April, it will be time enough for the town to take action at the regular annual meeting.

Dec. 20, 1890

Atheneum Proprietors.

Following is a list of the present share-holders of the Nantucket Atheneum, as revised and corrected from the records by the committee appointed for that purpose at the last annual meeting. There are doubtless errors and omissions, owing to the neglect of heirs of deceased proprietors and other persons in interest, to give proper notice of transfers of stock, while in many cases no transfers have been made. As no tax has been assessed on the shares for many years the number and identity of the stock-holders had become somewhat obscure for the reasons above stated. Corrections to the list are solicited and may be handed to the librarian, or either of the undersigned.

Alvin E. Paddock,
Arthur H. Gardner,
Committee.

Appleton, Mrs. Helen E.
Barnard, Susan R.
Barney, Mrs. Elizabeth G. M. (2)
Barrett, Anna
Bennett, Mrs. Elizabeth C.
Bodfish, Annie W.
Brock, Albert G.
Brock, Susan E.
Brooks, Mrs. Mary B.
Brooks, Mrs. Eunice C.
Brown, Mrs. Mary Ann
Brown, Mrs. Minnie A.
Buchanan, Lewis F.
Bunker, Lauriston
Burgess, Mrs. Annie A.
Burgess, Eugene
Burgess, Mrs. Ellen
Brayton, Miss
Cartwright, Benjamin
Chadwick, Albert S.
Chase, Mrs. Lena
Chase, Mary A.
Chatfield, Mrs. Margaret (2)
Codd, Eliza
Codd, William F.
Coffin, Mrs. Adeline
Coffin, Albert R.
Coffin, Charles F.
Coffin, Mrs. Elizabeth A.
Coffin, Elizabeth R.
Coleman, Ellenwood B.
Cook, Arthur H.
Cook, Emma
Cox, Ellen
Crosby, Mrs. Ella
Crosby, Mary E. (2)
Chase, Warren B.
Crowell, Mrs. Mary E.
Defriez, Frank
Elkins, Harriet A.
Folger, Annie Barker
Folger, Frederick Willets
Folger, Gulielma
Folger, Mrs. Lizzie A.
Folger, Lydia M.
Folger, Mary P.
Folger, Sarah Joy
Folger, Susan P.
Freeborn, Millard F.
Fuller, Fred V.

Dec. 11, 1915



THE ATHENEUM BEFORE THE GREAT FIRE.

The above is an old engraving which represents the old Nantucket Atheneum building, as it appeared in 1836—ten years before the "great fire". The drawing was made when the whaling business was booming, which justified the appearance of oil barrels in the picture. The old engraving is interesting for comparison with an illustration of the present Atheneum building, which was erected on the same site after the fire.

Gardner, Arthur H.
Gardner, Lydia Bunker
Gardner, Rebecca A.
Gardner, Mrs. Susan
Gardner, Wallace
Gifford, Mrs. Lizzie M.
Goodrich, Mrs. Annie M.
Grant, Mrs. Madeline
Grouard, Mrs. Lena
Harps, Harry
Holland, Mrs. Annie B.
Hussey, Mrs. Arrietta
Hussey, Elliot B.
Hussey, Peter
Hussey, Roland B.
Hills, Mrs. Caroline Parker
Hodge, Mrs. Annie E.
Jernegan, Ernest H.
Jones, Arthur W.
Keane, Mrs. Elizabeth
Kelley, Mrs. Sarah W.
Killen, John
King, Gertrude M. (2)
King, Mary E.
King, Robert B.
Lovell, Mrs. Phebe H.
Macy, Mrs. Clinton C.
Mann, Ella
Marden, Wallace C.
Mitchell, Mrs. Susan M.
Mitchell, Mrs. Susan R.
Mooers, Mrs. Anna R.
Morissey, Mrs. Charlotte E.
Mowry, Almon T.
Murphy, Franklin B.
Murphy, Josiah F.
Myrick, Alexander M.
Myrick, Lucretia C.
Paddock, Henry
Paddock, Alvin E. (2)
Parker, Clinton
Pease, Mrs. Ellen G.
Perry, Edward H.
Pitman, Timothy C.
Platt, Marie S.
Ramsdell, Mrs. Lydia
Remsen, Joseph G.
Riddell, Elizabeth S.
Ring, John C.
Roberts, David
Rule, Mrs. Anna C.
Russell, Dell
Simonds, Mrs. Jennie S.
Small, Mrs. Lydia A.
Smalley, Mrs. Lovisa
Smith, Alfred E.
Smith, William A.
Smith, William H. H.
Snow, Jesse B.
Starbuck, Mary E.
Swain, Anna G.
Swain, Mrs. Maria T.
Swain, Marian A.
Thomas, Mrs. Florence
Tice, Mrs. Avis S.
Tice, Mrs. Ida
Turner, Mrs. Susie E.
Westgate, James W.
Whitney, Caroline
Williams, Benjamin F.
Winslow, Mrs. Bessie
Wood, Nannie (2)

The Atheneum.

The Nantucket Atheneum library was opened as a free institution on Tuesday afternoon, under the new regulations, and at the hour of closing, 9 p. m., about two hundred persons had taken out cards, a large number of whom were people who had never before availed themselves of the privileges of the library. The librarian and her assistants were kept busily engaged for the first two hours after the doors were opened, but handled the extra duties without discomfort, and, as far as could be judged, to the satisfaction of all applying for cards.

Next week we shall print a very interesting historical sketch of the Atheneum, from the pen of Miss Sarah F. Barnard, the librarian, than whom there can be no one better suited to write of the institution.

April 7, 1900

The Nantucket Atheneum as a Free Library

By the assistance of an appropriation by the Town of Nantucket, the Atheneum was made a free Library in the year 1900.

The Trustees feel that it is well, and just to the tax-payers and public, to make a comparative statement (from the library statistics) of the last year before the free library, 1899, and the last current year, 1908:

Number of volumes in Library 1899—
10,500
Number of volumes in Library 1908—
14,344
Number of volumes circulated 1899—
15,200
Number of volumes circulated 1908—
27,899
Number non-resident subscribers 1899—
175
Number of cards issued to non-residents 1908—770

Number of volumes taken by non-residents 1899—2,700
Number of volumes taken by non-residents 1908—6,126

From six to nine hundred dollars is paid out yearly for new books.

The circulation of books, other than fiction, is increasing rapidly.

Respectfully,
Wendell Macy,
President Nantucket Atheneum.

July 17, 1909

Museum To Go

It was decided by the trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum, Monday evening, to dispense with the museum and use the room for library purposes. Some of the articles will be donated and loaned the Historical Association, while others will go to the Maria Mitchell Association, if they desire them.

Miss Sarah F. Barnard was re-elected librarian; Miss Clara Parker assistant librarian; and Miss Isabel Coffin, second assistant.

Jan. 14, 1905

For The Inquirer & Mirror.

Shall Nantucket Possess a Free Public Library?

Mr. Editor:

Next to the free public school in educational concerns of a town comes the free public library. Every town on Cape Cod but two, and every town in Dukes county but two, have free public libraries. And out of the 353 towns of this Commonwealth, there are only 25 that are without free public libraries, of which 25 towns Nantucket leads them all in population and wealth. I ponder over this ignominious exhibit with feelings of mortification and chagrin when I recall Nantucket's proud position in establishing and maintaining a free public school system so early in the century now nearing its end, to realize her lagging course in the matter of procuring a free public library. I am so fully persuaded that the town of Nantucket ought no longer to be classed among the unfavored few that I urgently request you to publish the accompanying circular correspondence, which I am advised has been received by several other persons as well as myself.

ALLEN COFFIN.

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION,
BOSTON, MASS., Dec. 28, 1895.

Allen Coffin, Esq., Nantucket:

The Free Public Library Commission desires to call your attention to the importance of the formation of a public library in your town, which shall be absolutely free to all its citizens. The educational value of such a library, the intellectual and moral stimulus it gives to any community, and the attraction it adds to the surroundings of home, have been so widely recognized in this state, that of the 353 towns and cities in Massachusetts all but twenty-five have public libraries that are free to every man, woman and child.

While the commission is aware that in some of these towns there are association libraries which charge a small fee for the use of books, the experience of other towns proves that such libraries do not meet the wants of the masses of the people, and that when a free library is established the number of readers increases many fold. If there are several villages in a town, the whole people can be served by the establishment of branches or special deliveries.

The commission appeals to you to bring this matter to the early attention of the citizens of your town by informal or public meetings; to stimulate them to secure funds for the purpose by entertainments and social gatherings, or by soliciting subscriptions of money or donations of books from persons who are interested in the intellectual welfare or material prosperity of the town; to procure the insertion of an article in the warrant for the next town meeting to see if the town will take action under this law; and finally, to secure a vote which shall insure to your town the gift of one hundred dollars' worth of books from the State.

The desire of the members of the commission is to be helpful to you in every way in their power, and they invite every person who has an interest in the formation of a free public library to call upon them, freely, for any advice or assistance at their command.

C. B. TILLINGHAST, Chairman.

The Nantucket Atheneum—a Unique Island Institution.

During the past few weeks workmen have been doing considerable repair work on the Nantucket Atheneum building, both interior and exterior re-placing of woodwork and painting, and with the renovation of the lower southeast corner of the structure allowing more space for the library.

While carpenters were piecing some new wood in a post on the west side, where a leaky gutter allowed water to rot the wood, a section of the side was exposed, revealing the construction. Many passers-by, both mechanics and laymen, showed a keen interest in the old building and numerous related questions were asked.

It was in the summer of 1900—just 40 years ago—that the Atheneum's splendid Library was opened to the public, although the structure itself is ninety-four years old. Within a few weeks after the disastrous fire of July 13 and 14, 1846, had destroyed some 360 buildings in the business district of the town, work of re-building the Atheneum had begun. It was completed in December, its contents partially re-stocked, and dedication services took place on January 3, 1847.

The beginnings of the Atheneum go beyond the original building, however. In the year 1820, seven Nantucketers banded together and formed a reading society which they called the "Nantucket Mechanics Social Library." These men were David Joy, Peleg Mitchell, Daniel P. Macy, John H. Coffin, Gideon Swain, Edward C. Hussey and George Fitch. Their original library consisted of 26 volumes on various subjects.

In 1823, another literary group was formed which called themselves the Columbian Library Society. The two organizations were united in 1827 under the name of the United Library Association.

In 1833 David Joy and Charles G. Coffin, for the Association, purchased land on Main street where the Carlisle brick mansion now stands, the land costing \$1,800. This was presented to the Society on the condition that it could raise \$3,500 for a brick building.

Those who wished to join the group donated \$10, which entitled them to an equal right with all other donors in library privileges, and by this means \$4,200 was raised.

But all members of the society were not in agreement as to the location of the proposed building. After some discussion and exchange of opinions, it was decided to exchange the land for that occupied by the Universalist Church on Federal and Lower Pearl streets, and to purchase the church building. This church had been built in 1825, of Gothic architecture, and of commodious size. The transaction was closed and in 1834 the Nantucket Atheneum Society was incorporated.

The original Atheneum Library contained 3,200 volumes, as well as numerous documents having to do with the early history of the island. The collection grew to include South Sea island curios and relics from all over the world, whaling logs, etc. All of this fine collection, with the exception of a few volumes, was destroyed by the terrible fire of 1846.

It is of interest to note that considerable was removed from the building when the flames began to spread from Main street, but they were placed in houses that were afterwards consumed. Among the few valuables saved was the Samuel F. B. Morse portrait of Prof. Silliman.

In the lecture room of the structure, which seated some 450 persons, many famous personalities and artists came to this then rich community to be appreciated by the merchants and ship-owners that formed the bulwark of the organization. It was truly the heyday of island whaling history and development. Men like Wendell Phillips, Horace Greeley, Theodore Parker, William Alger, Prof. Silliman and Ralph Waldo Emerson were among those who spoke glowing words in the old lecture hall.

Following the devastation of the "Great Fire," the society went rapidly ahead in restoring what had been destroyed. With the insurance money the building committee drew up plans and launched the re-building, and in December, 1846, the present Nantucket Atheneum was complete. At exercises taking place in the lecture hall on January 4, 1847, the structure was dedicated to the old task of enlightenment of human values, and on February 1st the library was again open.

The following officers were elected at this important meeting: President, William Mitchell; Vice President, Thomas Macy; Treasurer, Joseph Mitchell; Corresponding Secretary, Augustus Morse; Recording Secretary, Henry C. Worth; Trustees, Edward G. Kelley, Samuel B. Tuck, Eben Coleman, Charles Bunker, George H. Folger.

Donations from literary organizations off-island and from the proprietors of the society and other islanders helped form the nucleus of 160 volumes. Many more contributed to the museum which replaced the original collection. Most fortunate of all, the librarian was none other than Miss Maria Mitchell, soon to become famous as an astronomer and the discoverer of a comet.

With the depression resulting from the decline of the whaling industry, the proprietors soon began to feel the pinch of the times. Then came the exodus from the island to California, and then the Civil War.

During the post-war years, the financial condition of the society became much impaired. In the year 1870 a most successful fair was held, under the leadership of the President, Alfred Macy, and \$3,000 was obtained. The building was repaired and new volumes added to the library.

In 1883, the library was increased to 7,000 and had outgrown the available quarters, and so the west room was taken over as a reading room.

Numerous funds aided in the institution's growth, various sums being presented by William Hadwen, Mrs. Priscilla Wyer, David Joy, George B. Upton, Mrs. Eliza C. Nevins, Maria Mitchell Memorial Fund, and the Frederick C. Sanford Memorial Fund.

The outstanding gift among many given the Atheneum was that of Frederick C. Sanford, who died in 1899. In that year, as his will directed, a sum of \$20,000 was added to the society's endowment fund, 1000 books and 52 pictures. The books were handsome, with expensive bindings, and the pictures are now among the treasures of the library. Mr. Sanford's valuable collection of old documents was also willed to the institution.

Another notable addition was a set of Audubon's "Birds of America" from Mrs. David Joy, (1st edition) to replace one lost in the great fire. Many other individual gifts of valuable volumes have added greatly to the value and prestige of the Atheneum.

The steel shelves, replacing the old alcoves, and a card-catalogue system revolutionized the routine and system of the Library at the turn of the century. On April 3, 1900, the public was offered free use of the institution's books and facilities, and the historic structure entered upon its modern career as a distinct community asset.

In recent years, among valuable gifts was the library of the late Admiral William Mayhew Folger. Many important volumes on marine history are included in this library and the Atheneum shares with the Whaling Museum, which received many of the Admiral's pictures and mementos, in the pleasure derived from such a legacy.

The various presidents of the institution since the erection of the present structure in 1846, are as follows:

William Mitchell—1846 to 1852.
George H. Folger—1852 to 1853.
Edward G. Kelley—1854 to 1858.
Alfred Macy—1859 to 1872.
Charles G. Coffin—1873 to 1882.
Timothy W. Calder—1883 to 1888.
Thaddeus C. Defriez—1889 to 1901.
Almon T. Mowry—1902 to 1907.
Wendell Macy—1908 to 1910.
Alvin Paddock—1911 to 1916.
Arthur H. Gardner—1917 to 1924.
Millard F. Freeborn—1925 to 1928.
Alfred E. Smith—1929.

The present librarian, Miss Clara Parker, has worked in the library since 1899, succeeding Miss Sarah F. Barnard as librarian in 1905. In that same year, the present assistant librarian, Mrs. Isabel Coffin Gibbs, entered upon her duties behind the big desk. At the present time Miss Barbara Andrews and Miss Freida Anderson are also employed in the library work.

With the beginnings of the Nantucket Atheneum going back nearly a century and a quarter, and its inauguration as a public library dating back forty years, the institution has made its impress upon the life of the community. Its vital importance to young and old, school and home, makes it a definite asset which the passing years make more strong and enduring.

Atheneum And Historical Society Get Bequests.

The death at Nantucket on May 10 of Miss Anne C. Swift makes possible the distribution of \$60,000 in public bequests under the will of her brother, William H. Swift of Pittsfield, an attorney, who died April 10, 1924, leaving \$656,730 in personal property and \$37,050 in real estate.

Section seven of Mr. Swift's will provided that after the death of his widow and two sisters, Misses Anne C. and Caroline E. Swift, the sum of \$10,000 each was to be paid to the Boys Club, Y. M. C. A., House of Mercy Hospital and Berkshire Atheneum and Museum, all four institutions of Pittsfield.

The Nantucket Atheneum is also to receive \$10,000 and the Nantucket Historical Association \$5,000. The Berkshire County House for Aged Women will also receive \$5,000.

Upon the death of several other annuitants, the House of Mercy hospital will receive \$90,000, Williams college and the American Board of Foreign Missions, \$100,000 each and the college, the American board and the Pittsfield Y. M. C. A. are the ultimate beneficiaries. Mr. Swift's personal property has greatly appreciated in value since his death.

May 31, 1930

Nantucket Atheneum Gets Bequest of \$10,000.

In a decree handed down by Judge Arthur M. Robinson in Probate Court at Pittsfield, the Nantucket Atheneum receives a bequest of \$10,000 under the will of William H. Swift of this city, a native of the island town.

In his will Mr. Swift, an attorney, left \$10,000 to the Nantucket library but the Agricultural National Bank of Pittsfield, the only trustees under the will, applied to the court for a ruling stating that there is no Nantucket library. The income from the \$10,000 is to be used for the purchase of books. Mr. Swift was graduated from Nantucket High school.

Judge Robinson has decreed that the testator intended the bequeath for the Nantucket "Atheneum" which is in reality the Nantucket "library".

Aug. 9, 1930

Atheneum Notice.

ALL books must be returned to the Library for examination, Saturday, May 8, 1897, and remain till Tuesday, May 18. Anyone neglecting to return the same shall pay the usual fine of twenty-five cents.

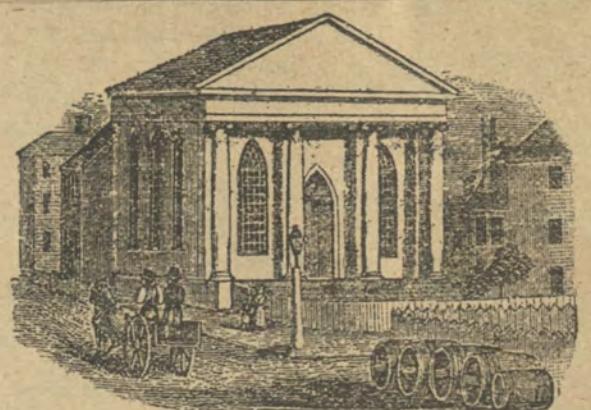
Per order of Trustees,
R. A. GARDNER, Sec'y.

May 1, 1897

May 18, 1940

THE CENTENNIAL OF THE ATHENEUM LIBRARY BUILDING.

BY GRACE BROWN GARDNER.



THE FIRST ATHENEUM (before the Fire of 1846)

In a letter written by Maria Mitchell nearly one hundred years ago, which is now the property of David Wood of this town, she refers to a "melancholy meeting over the yet red hot ashes of the former Atheneum" with a botanist who was contributing to the collections of the Museum.

Less than seven months later, from those "red hot ashes" of the Great Fire of 1846, had risen the present Atheneum building, which was opened to the public on the first day of February, 1847. With fire damage of a million dollars, one-third of the town in ruins, hundreds of families homeless, and seven-eighths of the mechanics without shops, stock or tools, that was a noteworthy achievement of our forefathers of which their descendants may well be proud.

Early History.

A very interesting history of the Nantucket Atheneum was published in the *Inquirer and Mirror* of April 14, 1900, on the occasion of the opening of the Atheneum as a Free Library for the town of Nantucket. This history was written by Miss Sarah F. Barnard, who was the Librarian at that time, and it is widely quoted in the present article.

While all records of the Atheneum previous to 1847 were destroyed in the Great Fire, from other sources we learn the story of its origin, which is as follows:

In 1820 seven young men of Nantucket—David Joy, Peleg Mitchell, Daniel P. Macy, John H. Coffin, Gideon Swain, Edward G. Hussey and George Fitch—associated themselves under the name of "Nantucket Mechanics' Social Library Association". They had only twenty-six volumes when they started the library. In 1823 another society was formed and named the "Columbian Library Society". In 1827 the two societies united, and the new society was called the "United Library Association".

In 1833 two of its members, David Joy and Charles G. Coffin, bought the land on Main street where the house of the late Henry Coffin now stands for \$1800 and gave it to the society on condition that the society would raise \$3500 and build a brick building suitable for a library room, lecture room and museum.

A sum of \$4200 was raised, each subscriber of \$10 having an equal share in the other donors. The lot of

land proved to be too small, and an exchange was made with the proprietors of the Universalist Church on the corner of Federal and Pearl streets. That building was altered to answer the requirements, and in 1834 the society was incorporated as the Nantucket Atheneum.

As may be seen from the above, there were at first three distinct departments in the Atheneum: the Library proper, the Museum and the Lecture Room.

The Museum was described as follows on an old sign which hung on the outside of the building some fifty years ago:

Atheneum Museum. The Atheneum Museum is now open to visitors in charge of Mr. H. P. Clapp who will be ready to explain its wonders to strangers, and answer all questions concerning the many curiosities on exhibition.

The Great Sperm Whale's Jaw, seventeen feet long, in perfect condition, with all the teeth in place, is among the attractive features of the Museum. Also, a model of the famous "Camels" with a ship in their embrace, an interesting reminder of the palmy days of the Nantucket Whale-Fishery; and hundreds of strange things and objects of curious interest, forming a complete Cabinet of wonders, both of sea and land, collected from nearly every part of the globe.

Admission 15 cents.

Hours of Exhibition 9 a. m. to 1 p. m., 6:30 p. m. to 8 p. m.

H. P. Clapp, 43 Centre St., Nantucket, Mass.

In 1825 this Museum was discontinued, as more space was needed for the Library. Most of the exhibits were loaned or donated to the Nantucket Historical Association, where they are seen each year by thousands of visitors.

The Lecture Course flourished for many years. At the modest price of one dollar per ticket for the entire winter course of lectures, the Nan-

tucketers of the forties and fifties had the opportunity of hearing such prominent men as Prof. Silliman, John Pierpont, Theodore Parker, Thomas Starr King, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Wendell Phillips, John G. Saxe, Henry D. Thoreau, Horace Greeley and many others.

The Lecture Hall was also used for entertainments, suppers, fairs and other social gatherings, and was a source of revenue to the Atheneum. As years went on, however, and building and fire laws became more stringent, extensive alterations would have been necessary to comply with the regulations, and the hall was closed to public gatherings. At present it is used exclusively for the storage of books, and contains large numbers of the less frequently circulated volumes.

Shareholders and Proprietors.

When the two original library societies combined in 1827 each subscriber of ten dollars had an equal right with all other donors. After the Great Fire fifty additional shares were created at a price of "not less than five dollars a share". In the By-Laws published in 1895 the number of shareholders was limited to 275. There was a small annual assessment on each share to provide for the upkeep of the Library. Only shareholders, and annual subscribers admitted under such conditions as the Trustees might direct, had the privilege of taking books from the Library.

After the Atheneum became a Public Library, there were no further assessments, nor were there any further privileges in regard to the circulation of books granted to the shareholders, and many shares became inactive. Owing to the neglect of heirs of deceased persons to give proper notice of transfers of shares, or even to make such transfers, the records have become incomplete.

In the near future there will appear in the columns of the *Inquirer and Mirror* a list of shareholders as of 1915. Any of those shares not already transferred may be transferred on the books of the society, the old certificate first being given up or shown to be lost. A new certificate will then be issued by the Secretary, under the seal of the corporation.

On the west wall of the Library hangs the first certificate issued by the Atheneum when it was incorporated in 1834. It was issued by David Joy to his brother, Moses Joy, Jr., and was presented to the Library by another David Joy, the third in line by that name, in 1928.

Recovery From The Great Fire.

The earliest records now existing begin with a meeting held in the Vestry of the Methodist "Chapel" on Monday, 8th month 1846. The President, William Mitchell, stated that the object of the meeting was to see "what course shall be taken by the Proprietors with reference to the Institution for the future, the Atheneum Building with its entire contents including the Library and Cabinet of Curiosities having been destroyed by the terrible conflagration which occurred on the 13th and 14th ultimo."

This, and the records following, are painstakingly written in the Spencerian penmanship of that period, which resembles copperplate. They are very explicit. Various committees were formed to solicit contributions of money, of books, and of articles for the Museum. Other committees were to attend to various phases of the contemplated building program. Later page after page of the records lists the sums of money contributed, and the separate volumes and the sets of volumes donated by individuals, by publishers, by libraries, by organizations and by scientific societies. There is no question but that the response to the appeals was both prompt and generous.

The report of the Building Committee, Jan. 4, 1847, includes the builders' specifications for the rebuilding, with dimensions of lumber used, as "King posts 7 by 12 inches" and "Queen posts 8 by 8 inches", and the whole frame being of "pine and heavy timber and of sufficient strength in the opinion of your committee to make a strong and safe building". The test of one hundred years has proved the correctness of their opinion.

they have erred on the side of moderation, they have been induced to name the sum of ten dollars at which the committee recommend to the society to hold the price of shares during the present year.

Gorham Coffin,
Chairman of Com.
27th Jany., 1835.

the library.

July 20, 1878

Nov. 5, 1910



THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM LIBRARY

Agitation for a Free Public Library.

As the years passed, instead of feeling pride in its excellent Atheneum Library, Nantucket began to be sensitive in regard to being one of the few towns in the Commonwealth with no Free Public Library. There was much agitation in regard to making the Atheneum free. The matter was brought before the Proprietors in 1892. Of forty-five shares represented only two were in favor. Debate waxed strong and bitter feeling developed.

A letter from Allen Coffin, Esq., published in the *Inquirer and Mirror* in 1895 quotes an appeal from the chairman of the Free Public Library Commission urging the establishment of such a Library. At that time, of 353 towns in the Commonwealth only 25 were without Free Public Libraries. Of these 25 towns Nantucket was far in the lead both in population and in wealth.

Public demand grew slowly but steadily. Not until 1900 was the controversy settled. Then, after repeated meetings and many conferences with the Selectmen, by the assistance of an appropriation of \$900 made by the Town of Nantucket, the Nantucket Atheneum Library was made a Free but not a Public Library, and opened as such in April of that year.

Gifts and Bequests.

The Atheneum has been most fortunate in the wide-spread interest shown in its welfare, as testified by numerous gifts, donations and bequests. Among these there is space for mentioning only a few which are among the most outstanding.

To replace the original folio edition of Audubon's "Birds of America", to which the Atheneum had been a subscriber and which was destroyed in the Great Fire, Mrs. David Joy presented the Library with a set in the octavo edition. The books are handsomely bound in Russia leather and protected in a suitable cabinet, which was also the gift of Mrs. Joy.

erous documents having to do with the early history of the island. The collection grew to include South Sea island curios and relics from all over the world, whaling logs, etc. All of this fine collection, with the exception of a few volumes, was destroyed by the terrible fire of 1846.

Frederick C. Sanford not only bequeathed \$20,000 to the society's endowment fund, but gave a thousand books from his personal Library. Many of these books are rare editions with expensive bindings, and together with his donation of over fifty valuable pictures and his collection of old documents are among the treasures of the Atheneum.

The will of William H. Swift provided a substantial sum, of which the interest is used for the purchase of new books. Probably many users of the Library have noticed the stamp "Purchased from the William H. Swift Fund" on the title pages of books.

Approximately 2600 volumes consisting mainly of biography, history, books on the Navy and on diplomatic relations with various foreign countries came from the Library of Rear Admiral William Mayhew Folger. The Atheneum shares with the Whaling Museum, which received many pictures, documents and mementoes, in the generous Nantucket legacies of Admiral Folger.

Among other donations by Edward F. Sanderson is "Hakluyt's Voyages" in over two hundred volumes. These are records of the discoveries of the earliest explorers in all parts of the world. Few Libraries in the country possess a complete set of this extremely valuable work.

The Atheneum was one of the several Nantucket institutions to share in large legacies from the estate of Sidney Mitchell.

Each autumn as our summer visitors leave us, many make gifts to the Library of books which they have enjoyed during their vacation here. These books are recent fiction, biography, travel and other volumes of timely interest, and are much appreciated.

Merely to enumerate the gifts, donations and bequests that the Atheneum has received during the last hundred years would require a separate article.

Present Status.

From its earliest days the Library has had a steady and healthy growth. At the time of the Great Fire it contained 3,000 volumes; in 1883 there were 7,000; by 1900, when it was made a Free Library, the number had increased to 20,000. The report of last year lists 45,904 volumes. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of borrowers and in books circulated.

The Library Building, however, has remained practically unchanged all through the one hundred years since its erection. More and more space has been utilized for shelves, until in her 1946 report the Librarian reports every nook and cranny crowded, with no space remaining for future accessions.

At present the greatest need of the library, aside from shelf space, is a separate room for children and young people, with a special Librarian to aid them with reference work connected with their school home work, and also to foster in them the love of good reading so that it may become a source of pleasure throughout their lives. The crowding together of children and adults in inadequate space, as at present, occasions many problems which a separate room would obviate.

Another need is for a quiet room where adults may work on genealogical, historical or other problems which sometimes require many documents, pamphlets and volumes of reference. At present a card table in some corner offers the only opportunity for such work. Every year the number of such workers increases.

Nantucket has good reason for pride on the occasion of the One Hundredth Anniversary of our Atheneum Building, and for gratitude toward all who have aided in making the Library the outstanding institution that it is at present. And among all to whom gratitude is due, none are more worthy of it than its three Librarians whose terms of service span one hundred and twelve years—Miss Maria Mitchell, Miss Sarah F. Barnard and Miss Clara Parker.

—Grace Brown Gardner,
Sec'y, Nantucket Atheneum.

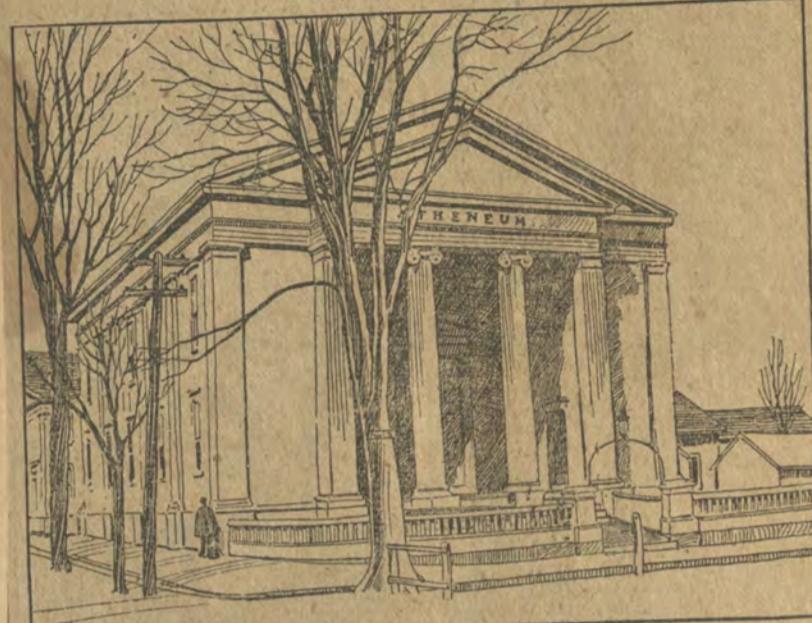
APRIL 12, 1947.

Upton, Mrs. Eliza C. Nevins, Maria Mitchell Memorial Fund, and the Frederick C. Sanford Memorial Fund.

May 1, 1897

NANTUCKET ELATED OVER ITS LIBRARY.

Old Atheneum, After Three-Quarters of a Century,
Loses Its Identity.



THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM.

Morse Portrait in Atheneum Needs Restoration.

In the magazine alcove of the Nantucket Atheneum, hangs a three-quarter length, nearly life size portrait by one of the famous American portrait painters of the early nineteenth century. So great a painter was he that the Metropolitan Museum of New York gave a large memorial exhibition of his work a few years ago. Samuel Finley Breese Morse, artist, was also the inventor of the telegraph. The Morse Code bears his name. So famous is he for this, that few realize that he was also an artist of note whose works are prized by our museums and art galleries.

The Atheneum portrait was painted in 1824, and given by the owner, its subject, Professor Silliman of Yale University, to his friend, William Mitchell, father of Maria Mitchell, the year after the great fire to hang in the newly completed Atheneum. A letter from Professor Silliman is interesting to quote:

New Haven, June 25th, 1847.
Dear Friend Mitchell:

At last I have arranged to forward to your care for your Lyceum the portrait which you last summer thought worthy of acceptance. It goes to Boston by the Schooner Frank, Captain Wiley, who has directions to ship it on board a tight and good vessel having a careful commander at Boston for your town... The picture was painted in New York in June, 1824, by Samuel Finley Breese Morse—the gentleman whose name is now associated with the electric telegraph.

This portrait is a valuable work of art, as well as an historic document. It is now greatly in need of restoration for the sake of preservation. In course of time the canvas on which an oil painting rests, becomes thin and crumbles, the paint cracks, and the canvas cuts away from the stretchers inside the frame.

Restoration is not a question of repainting and superficial varnish. In the best sense, it is a scientific study of a painting by an expert who has the means of using X-ray and chemical analysis to aid him in putting the canvas back into its original condition with as great fidelity as possible. It is rebacked and carefully and correctly cleaned, as well as made to look fresh on the surface. The Fogg Museum of Harvard and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston recommended such a man when I enquired, and he has already proved his knowledge and ability in the splendid work which he has done for the Old Dartmouth Historical Society in New Bedford as a result of this recommendation.

The present writer is very eager to see the historic portraits of Nantucket preserved. Even in these days of practical pressure, they must be attended to little by little. It seems right to begin with the most important and valuable works, among which is the Samuel F. B. Morse portrait of Professor Silliman. I have, therefore, started a special Fund in the Pacific Bank for the restoration of this portrait. I do not expect large individual sums, but believe that if many people give what they can, even the children their pennies, we shall all feel a far more personal interest in this fine portrait. A few friends have already contributed, so that we have to begin with a nest egg of \$16 which we hope will quickly grow to the \$125 we need.

Any sum, from the smallest to a large one, will be welcome. We shall not ask for contributions, not yet, at any rate, especially since this is a special cause more interesting to some than to others, so won't you give something of your own accord, giving it or sending it either to Mr. William C. Brock, a trustee of the library, or to the undersigned?

Also, a box will be placed in the library in Miss Parker's care, into which small donations may be dropped. As soon as the sum is complete, the work will be done. If this interests you, please do not wait, but send your contribution immediately, whatever its size.

In a few weeks the status of the fund will be announced again, together with a list of contributors' names.

I hope that this initial fund may be the beginning of an effort to secure the means of saving many of the fine old portraits which are so badly in need of attention.

Mary Turley Robinson.

Sept. 24, 1938

PRICE FOR ATHENEUM SHARES.

The committee appointed at the meeting of which this is an adjournment, to report to this meeting a price for which shares in the Atheneum shall in future be disposed of by the Corporation, report that, having a specific object committed to their charge, they were happy in having on the committee the Gentlemen through whose munificence the Institution has been enabled to attain its present standing, and, learning directly from them that their principal object has been to make the institution as useful as possible, by placing its benefits within the reach of enterprising young men & considering also that it is a subject which the society can regulate at any future meeting, whenever it shall be ascertained that they have erred on the side of moderation, they have been induced to name the sum of ten dollars at which the committee recommend to the society to hold the price of shares during the present year.

Gorham Coffin,
Chairman of Com.
27th Jany., 1835.

NANTUCKET, April 13—The Nantucket atheneum, after an existence of three-quarters of a century, has ceased to be carried on as a private library and passes into a free public library in accordance with the propositions advanced by the town and adopted at its recent annual meeting.

This association has for a long time held the distinction of being better equipped in reading matter and finances than any other in the commonwealth for a town of its size. It was organized in 1820 by the following, who were prominent in making Nantucket's future history at that time: Daniel P. Macy, John H. Coffin, Gideon Swain, Peleg Mitchell, Edward C. Hussey, George Fitch and David Joy. Its name was the Nantucket mechanics social library.

It started with 26 volumes, and kept them in an unfinished room of Mr. Joy's house. Three years later a similar organization was formed under the name of the Columbian social library. In 1827 a union was proposed and carried out under the title of United Library association. The society flourished, and 10 years later possessed more than 1000 volumes, and larger accommodations were necessary.

Mr. Joy and Mr. Charles G. Coffin then purchased a piece of land on Main st., and agreed to give it to the society provided it would raise \$3500 for a building. The proposition was accepted, the sum was soon raised, and each subscriber of \$10 was entitled to all the rights of membership. Before the building was erected, however, it was decided to purchase the old Universalist church building, giving the land as part payment. The building was accordingly purchased and fitted to meet the wants of the society, which was then incorporated with the name Nantucket atheneum.

It continued for 10 years the pride and cherished object of Nantucket's citizens, diffusing its benefits, which were powerfully felt and acknowledged by the entire community, when in a moment almost it was nothing but a pile of smouldering ruins. The building, with its valuable library of 3200 volumes, records and documents; its cabinet of curiosities and everything appertaining was consumed by the fire, which also destroyed a large portion of the town.

The destruction of this library and the loss of many private collections of books, at the same time, left the inhabitants of the island more destitute of reading resources than ever before. The circumstances called for some unusual exertion and the proprietors, though cast down were not dismayed, and at an early date a meeting was called, when it was resolved that the atheneum should again rise in beauty and loveliness from its ashes.

The money received from insurance was used for the erection of the new building, to be placed upon the old site, corner of Pearl and Federal sts, where it stands today, a beautiful monument, with pillars of the Ionic and Corinthian orders, to those sterling men and women who have long since joined the silent majority. The builders were F. Brown and Charles Wood.

Numerous donations of books and funds have been made from time to time by interested townspeople. Prominently among these may be mentioned that made by the late Frederick C. Sanford. Today it has a collection of nearly 11,000 volumes, all in good condition, properly catalogued and up to date in every particular, a building in good repair and a pride of the town.

There have been only two librarians in all this time, the first being the well-known Prof. Maria Mitchell, who resigned in October, 1856, when Miss Sarah F. Barnard, the present incumbent, was chosen. A museum, with curios from all parts of the world, is also connected with the building, under charge of Capt. Henry P. Clapp, an old salt of many years' service.

Many of the early whaling masters have contributed to the collection, for many unexplored islands in strange waters were visited by them, and in each instance the Atheneum museum was enriched by a relic. The first museum, which was destroyed by the fire, contained, perhaps, a larger collection of specimens than any in the country.

The present organization is as follows: Hon. Thaddeus C. DeFries pres., Almon T. Mowry vice pres., Albert G. Brock treas., Mrs. Maria T. Swain secy., Miss Rebecca A. Gardner secy., George G. Fish, Roland B. Hussey, Alex. M. Myrick, Mrs. Catherine Starbuck, Mrs. Elizabeth G. M. Barney, trustees.

FOR THE ATHENEUM.—Mrs. George B. Upton has presented the Atheneum library with a fine portrait, in crayon, of her late husband, who was one of the most liberal contributors in founding that institution. Mr. Upton made a liberal bequest at his death for its maintenance. The picture will be highly appreciated by all who visit the library.

July 20, 1878

Nov. 5, 1910

For The Inquirer and Mirror.
The Free Public Library.

Mr. Editor:

The suggestion of your correspondent, M. E. B., in last week's issue commends itself to my deliberate judgment as not only feasible, but pre-eminently desirable. It is too late in the century to consider objections to a free public library. There can be no good reason why the friends of the free library system may not organize a library association for the purpose of collecting books for the benefit of all the people of the island, and when the proper time comes and the town is fully prepared to adopt a free public library, as it surely will, the work of the association can be turned over to the town for future management as other town libraries are conducted. The immeasurable advantage of a free public library over any other library system, has been so fully demonstrated that the State now contributes \$100 worth of books to every town that founds a free library, as an encouragement of this method of disseminating knowledge. Donations of books and money would be proffered to such an association as your correspondent has suggested. If a few interested persons will but open the way the mass of the people will promptly respond. The call for aid in such an undertaking will meet with quick response.

All such projects always encounter more or less opposition, either from purely selfish motives or from utter indifference. It was only reasonable to have anticipated an opposition to the advancement of such educational opportunities in Nantucket. It is but a repetition of the opposition to the common-school system which raged here in 1825, and continued its virulent antagonism until the advent of the Coffin School on a comparatively free basis, in 1827, actually forced the people into the establishment of free public schools. In fact, the opposition to a free and common basis of education for the children of Nantucket was so pronounced, that legal proceedings against the town were actually necessary to compel it to comply with the law then recently enacted, requiring towns to maintain public schools. The recent introduction of free text books into the common schools met with similar adverse argument. Looking back through the dim vista of three-fourths of a century I can read the exclamations of the opponents of free public schools in substantially the same language now employed by those who oppose the free public library. "What is the use of free schools?" "Are not the private schools cheap enough?" "Why should the man without children be taxed to pay for the education of other people's children?" "We do not need them," *et cetera, ad nauseam*.

The present Atheneum library was the combination of two small libraries, the first of which being formed in 1820 under the name of the "Mechanics' Association," and the books were kept in private houses, the different members taking turns to act as librarian. In 1823 another small library was started under the name of the "Columbian Library Association." These two libraries were consolidated in 1827, under the title of "United Library Association," and continued under this name until 1833, when the Hon. David Joy and Charles G. Coffin, Esq., offered the society a valuable tract of land in the central portion of the town, conditioned that a substantial building be erected thereon for the purposes of the society. The funds were

soon subscribed, but instead of erecting an edifice, the society made purchase of the Universalist Church, and converted it into a lecture hall, museum and library, and became incorporated under the name of Nantucket Atheneum in 1834. Free public libraries were then unknown, and few towns then possessed better educational institutions than Nantucket. Now she is the most populous and most wealthy town of the Commonwealth without a free public library, a fact neither creditable nor pardonable.

And now to give a practical turn to your correspondent's suggestions, I propose that you call a meeting of the friends of a free public library, to meet at some convenient place at no distant day, for the purpose of forming an association as the nucleus of a free public library. The sooner the plan is formulated the sooner will the perfection of the plan be realized. I will donate ten volumes to the organization.

ALLEN COFFIN.
NANTUCKET, Feb. 20, 1896.

Atheneum And Historical Society Get Bequests.

The death at Nantucket on May 10 of Miss Anne C. Swift makes possible the distribution of \$60,000 in public bequests under the will of her brother, William H. Swift of Pittsfield, an attorney, who died April 10, 1924, leaving \$656,730 in personal property and \$37,050 in real estate.

Section seven of Mr. Swift's will provided that after the death of his widow and two sisters, Misses Anne C. and Caroline E. Swift, the sum of \$10,000 each was to be paid to the Boys Club, Y. M. C. A., House of Mercy Hospital and Berkshire Atheneum and Museum, all four institutions of Pittsfield.

The Nantucket Atheneum is also to receive \$10,000 and the Nantucket Historical Association \$5,000. The Berkshire County House for Aged Women will also receive \$5,000.

Upon the death of several other annuitants, the House of Mercy hospital will receive \$90,000, Williams College and the American Board of Foreign Missions, \$100,000 each and the college, the American board and the Pittsfield Y. M. C. A. are the ultimate beneficiaries. Mr. Swift's personal property has greatly appreciated in value since his death.

May 20, 1930

Mrs. Lang's Splendid Gift To the Nantucket Atheneum.

Through the interest and courtesy of Mrs. Henry Lang, of Nantucket and Montclair, N. J., the Nantucket Atheneum has been presented the Smithsonian Institution's famous Scientific Series of 12 volumes, known as the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Edition.

This de luxe series has been prepared by experts—the officers and fellows of the Smithsonian Institution—for the diffusion of knowledge and the increase of its financial endowment for scientific research. Each copy is registered in the name of the owners in the records of the Institution at Washington. The edition was limited to 1000 copies, and the Atheneum's is numbered 877.

The series includes volumes on the Smithsonian Institution's history, North American Indians, Insects, Minerals, Wild Animals, Man From Farthest Past, Cold Blooded Vertebrates, Warm Blooded Vertebrates, Great Inventions, Plant Lore, Shelled Vertebrates, etc. Charles Greeley Abbot, D. Sc., Secretary of the Smithsonian, is editor-in-chief for the Coolidge Memorial Edition.

On the dedicatory page is the following printed inscription:

Registered in the records of the Smithsonian Institution in the name of the Nantucket Atheneum, Nantucket, Mass., to whom it was presented by

Mrs. Florence Rand Lang
as a memorial to
Henry Lang

with the hope that this great scientific work will prove to be an educational and inspirational contribution to the development of the young people of Nantucket. Henry Lang, by precept and example, all through his life radiated modestly but dominantly the high ideals of service, tolerance and enlightened understanding that imbued the minds of the great Forefathers of this Country. With high ideals of Americanism, expressed in thought and action, the life of Henry Lang is an outstanding and constructive example for all coming generations.

Dec. 16, 1939

Free Public Libraries.

The growth of free public libraries in the state of Massachusetts has kept pace with the free public school system. Nearly a half century ago the veteran editor of the Boston *Advertiser*, Nathan Hale, while acting as a member of the Boston school board, said: "The good people of Boston send their children to the public schools not because they are cheapest, but because they are the best." It has also been apparent that where public schools flourish, private schools languish. The same truth holds good concerning free public libraries. The great libraries of ancient times were of benefit to the favored few, like all the other institutions of learning. And while the systems for education have expanded, the library systems have kept pace with them in most parts of the world. Men of learning, of genius, and of scholarly attainments have ever patronized the libraries and endeavored to promote their maintenance and use.

When Benjamin Franklin was residing in France as the accredited envoy of this nation, a new town or parish was organized in Massachusetts, and the citizens thereof determined to name it Franklin. The information was duly conveyed to the eminent philosopher with the suggestion that if he thought proper to bestow upon the new township any mark of approval or token, that the people would appreciate a bell for the public edifice. With characteristic gravity the great man responded that as he "preferred sense to sound" he would rather present the people a library of books. And he directed his American agent to make purchase of a library for the town of Franklin. It was probably the beginning of the free public library which now exists in that town.

Social libraries were formed in Nantucket at an early period by a combination of gentlemen who desired to read more books than any one of them could afford to own. The Nantucket Atheneum library is the out-growth and consolidation of a number of such libraries, which were first kept in private houses, and then, with the increase in the number of books, in more public and central localities. It is doubtful if the story of all the Nantucket libraries could now be written.

In many cities and towns of this state liberal gifts have been made for founding libraries more or less free to the inhabitants. And along with the public schools of Nantucket at one time small libraries of good reading were maintained for the use of the pupils. The Coffin School has also a small library at this time. The Sunday schools connected with the different denominations have for a long while instituted libraries which are constantly in use. All of such small libraries in a small town like Nantucket, must ever hold a subordinate place to the larger library like the Atheneum.

The present Atheneum library dates back to 1846-7, the former collections having been destroyed in the great conflagration of July 13-14, 1846. It has constituted the main supply of miscellaneous reading for the people of Nantucket for more than half a century. While the free public library system in most of the towns in the state, by aid of appropriations which the towns have been by statute authorized to make, has swept many institutions of this kind into the control of the towns, and opened up the use of books to all the people thereof, the Nantucket Atheneum has continued to maintain its corporate existence and limited the use of its books to subscribers and proprietors for a fee, up to the present time.

The town having voted an appropriation to either found a free public library or induce the Atheneum to open its doors to the public on a free basis, the proprietors at a called meeting on Friday evening of last week, by a vote of 50 to 21, voted to make the use of the library free for one year as an experiment, and authorized the trustees to put the experiment upon trial at as early a day as practicable. If the experiment shall not prove satisfactory to all interested it will be the first trial of the kind in Massachusetts with an unfavorable result. Every citizen of the town, under such reasonable safeguards as the trustees shall deem prudent for the proper conduct of a free library, will have the right to take books from the Atheneum library, not as a matter of charity, but because the town pays for the privilege out of the taxes levied upon all the people of the town.

March 3, 1900

REOPENING OF THE ATHENEUM—*Olio Entertainment.*—The Atheneum building was reopened to the public Monday evening, a general invitation being extended to our people to examine the improvements which have been made in the library and new reading room, as well as the museum, which was quite generally availed of, the extension—or reading room—being the greatest object of interest. This room, which has been known as the West Room, has been fitted with spacious alcoves and shelves for books, and a large reading table placed in the centre, which patrons of the institution will find a great convenience. A spacious doorway has been cut through the north wall, leading to the library proper. The desk of the librarian has been transferred to the west end of the library room and surrounded by a neat and substantial counter, and both rooms look bright and fresh in a dress of new paint.

In the upper hall an entertainment was given for the benefit of the library, which drew out a large house. This hall has undergone improvements, having been thoroughly cleaned and painted, new ventilators put in the ceiling, and the stage treated to a new, neat carpet. The walls at the rear and side of the stage were adorned with portraits of men who had been closely identified with the Atheneum in various ways, and the entire room bore a refreshing appearance. The evening's programme was full of good things, and opened with an instrumental selection for violin and piano, "Marcia de Figaro," by Mr. John W. Hallett and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Mary E. Starbuck recited beautifully "Ode to the Atheneum," written by Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck. Miss Emma Cook sang with sweet grace "O, Give Me a Home by the Sea," Miss Susie E. Brock playing the accompaniment. An address, "Invisible Portraits," the production of Dr. Arthur E. Jenks, was an excellent paper, embracing tender tributes to several of the parties represented in the portraits upon the walls, and to many of the prominent poets and lecturers who had in former years graced the stage of the institution—such men as Rev. John Pierpont, John G. Saxe, Wendell Phillips, George Sumner, Rev. Henry Giles, Horace Greeley, Park Benjamin, Rev. William R. Alger, Rev. T. Starr King, Thoreau, Prof. Silliman, and Hon. William Mitchell. The treatment of the subject was suggested while reading the preface of an elegant volume in the Atheneum Library, entitled, "Biographical Encyclopedia of Massachusetts of the Nineteenth Century." The book was the thoughtful and liberal bequest of the late Charles G. Coffin, one of the founders of the Atheneum, and many years its honored president. Dr. Jenks was warmly encored at the conclusion of his remarks. A duet, "Gently Sighs the Breeze," was very sweetly rendered by Mr. B. G. Tobey and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Emma Cartwright added greatly to the laurels she has already won, in the recitation of "The Death Bridge of the Tay," which she recited most admirably, holding the audience in breathless silence, and portraying the dark and bright sides of the poem in a vivid manner, which called forth a round of applause as she finished. Mr. John W. Hallett followed with a bass solo, "The Tempest," which was finely rendered. An original poem, by William H. Macy, Esq., which embodied a brief history of the old and new Atheneum buildings, with happy hits, was very happily read by Miss Stella L. Chase. A song "Hide and Seek," by Miss Emma Cook, was charmingly sung. Allen Coffin, Esq., addressed the audience brief-

ly, naming the portraits, and presenting to the audience the propriety of a liberal support of an institution which has done and will do so much good in this community. A selection for violin and piano, by Mr. Hallett and Miss Cook, completed the evening's entertainment, which was a success in every way, netting a snug little sum for the benefit of the library. We print below, by request, the poem of Mr. Macy:

Our Atheneum.

With loyal hearts responsive to the call,
We meet again within this dear old hall,
And cheerfully our modest efforts lend
To serve the interests of a dear old friend,
To aid our Atheneum, so highly prized,
Braving all risk of being criticised.
With music, speech and song we meet to-night,
And surely it would seem but just and right
To call up, in this rhyming contribution,
The story of so good an institution.

Previous to eighteen hundred thirty-four,
(I cannot say how many years before,
Nor would it matter even if I could,)
Upon this site a house of worship stood.
I well remember its appearance then,
Though but a little urchin less than ten;
And as no sign-board e'er escaped my search,
On this I read, First Universalist Church;
Also a date printed in letters Roman,
This I recall because 'twas so uncommon.
But what is such vague recollection good for,
Since now I can't tell what those letters stood for;
As to the edifice, I must allow,
Its general form was much like this one now;
No lofty tower or spire towards heaven reached,
But here the Reverend George Bradburn preached.
I heard him once, only, I believe,
Gaining for just once the parental leave.
Our Quaker birthright tol'd us it was wrong
To worship God with music and with song;
But I confess a feeling of delight,
To find that there were those who thought it right.
The world moved on, and soon there came a day
When Universalism didn't pay;
Or else 'twas something else, it doesn't matter,
Whether it was the former or the latter,
If I digress, my story'll ne'er be told,
And so, one day, I heard the church was sold.
The United Library Association,
Doing a good work for our civilization,
Counted some noble men within its ranks,
To whom we owe to-night our grateful thanks.
Coffin and Joy are honored above all,
Their portraits, side by side, adorn the wall,
And grateful memories in our minds suggest,
Though they have passed on to their final rest.
These men with generous sums to head the list,
Found others prompt and willing to assist;
Losing no time, at their great work they went,
Building up for themselves a monument;
Leaving results to us which, when we are gone,
Will stand for generations yet unborn.
Thus a foundation was firmly laid,
A building purchased, certain changes made
To fit it for the purposes designed,
To elevate the human heart and mind,
The ball when started quickly onward rolled,
And thus we heard that the old church was sold.
New books were purchased,
Old ones freely given,
By eager hands the work was pushed and driven.
The precious volumes, starting from a few,
Quickly to hundreds, then to thousands grew,
And readers old and young being thus allured,
The library became a thing assured.
A museum, too, was sure success to win,
For contributions rare came pouring in,
All the queer things in nature and in art,
All climes, all lands and oceans bore their part.
Our men in those days dug wealth from the seas,
O'er the wide world their canvas woosed the breeze.
Old sailors from long voyages returned,
Enjoyed the rest they had so bravely earned,
And, as might be supposed, these stout sea-kings
Had brought home many strange and curious
things,
And these, when brought together for inspection,
Made up a rare and valuable collection.

The lecture room formed an important part
In the grand programme from the very start.
Courses of lectures were inaugurated,
Keeping the public interest unabated.
Home talent for the most part was employed,
Large audiences applauded and enjoyed.
Yet of those old discourses we must say,
How different from the lectures of to-day!
All the world did not travel them as now,
On railroad trains—because they knew not how;
Progress in later days has pushed aside
The things with which our sires were satisfied.
The simple battery and Voltaic pile,
So strange in those days, now would raise a smile;
Wonderful things with which they were beguiled,
Have now become but playthings for the child;
Lecturers now would look for small returns,
For things which every high-school urchin learns.
He knows that none would go into ecstasies
Over a long discourse on hydrostatics.
Imagine grown folks listening calm and placid,
Learning how vitriol is sulphuric acid;
How it requires six planes to bound a cube,
And what is meant by the pneumatic tube!
With the dimensions of Earth, Mars and Venus,
And what the distance is in miles between us!
Science, compared with what she now can show,
Was but an infant fifty years ago.
None knew of Darwin then nor Herbert Spencer,
But wondrous were the air-pump and condenser.
But yet the picture has another side,
Which makes us think of the old hall with pride.

What moral ideas found expression there!
How many young reforms can witness bear
Of the slow growth of right and common sense,
Helped on by good impressions sent out thence?
There friends of education held convention,
Discussing points too numerous to mention;
Discarding old and building up new rules,
Seeking to raise the standard of our schools.
There anti-slavery champions sometimes dared
To raise their protest for which few then cared,
Even to sue, but later, all admired.

The force of strong conviction that inspired
The courage shown by those few pioneers,—
So marvellous the change in twenty years!

And when the Washingtonian reform
Swept o'er the country like a driving storm,
I heard the voice of "old John Hawkins" ring,
Warning us all 'gainst the accursed thing.
That storm passed o'er; 'tis sad to think that men
Need his rude eloquence now, even as then.
"Laughing gas" made us fun in that dear hall;
Now, utilized, it yields no fun at all;
'Twas there we first saw "subjects" mesmerized,
And then concluded we'd been victimized;
There Henry Wright preached universal peace,
With faith that wars and human strife would cease;
And Graham, with his vegetable diet,
Making small gains, and still less converts by it.
But why go on? this sort of retrospective
Carries me always in the same direction.
Queer episodes in youth and boyhood all
Associate themselves with that old hall.

So, by a grateful people prized and nourished,
Through twelve bright years our Atheneum flourished;

Its library had grown to fill the shelves;
Some of the books were fortunes in themselves.
The queer things to the museum attached,
In certain specialties could scarce be matched
By any in the land. Disaster came;
Our Atheneum went up in smoke and flame!
Yet not alone, 'twas on that fatal day,
When hundreds saw their savings swept away
Before the all-devouring fiery blast,
Undoing all the labors of the past.

"Tis idle to attempt to estimate
Our loss in dollars, when relentless fate
Snatches away from us, as in this case,
Things which no money ever can replace;
There are some things that money cannot do;
'Twas those old things we wanted, not the new.

But yet our Atheneum rose once more;
The building handsomer than e'er before
Rose Phoenix-like just where the old one stood,
To wield through all these years a power for good,
More precious far than jewels in our sight,
The very house in which we meet to-night.
A generous gift of books sent from abroad
(The fact should give us pleasure to record),
Served as a nucleus to build upon.

More were soon added, and the fight was won.
"Twas not so easy to begin again
Collecting curious things from o'er the main;
No one could duplicate those things destroyed;
A museum room seemed like an aching void.
Besides, things were not as they used to be;
The times had changed, and so, forsooth, had we.

Our fleet of shipping grew, we must confess,
"Small by degrees, and beautifully less;"
Our dear old business destined was to fail,
Owing to the great scarcity of whale,
And smaller prices for the few we got,
The California mania, and what not,
Until of ships and active men bereft,
No mariners, but old worn-out ones, left.

The museum picked up what it could collect,
And is to-day all that we should expect.
But jolly P. T. Barnum tells his readers
To run a museum you must have feeders.
Our Atheneum felt the stern decline,
Languished, like things in every other line;

Its finances at times ran very low,
It seemed at times to be but touch and go;
No new books added, the few paying shares
Searcely affording income for repairs.

Rewards come sometimes to the patient waiter,
So now and then some generous testator,
By timely gift, has helped us through the year,
And brought down blessings on his memory dear.
Still holding on through all the ups and downs,
Still striving, whether fortune smiles or frowns,

A three days' fair held thirteen years ago,
Built up our funds, then running very low,
And though by no means richly we're endowed,
Yet now that every summer brings a crowd,
This helps to swell our modest income more,
And whispers of still brighter days in store.

The story of the old hall has been told,
But this one can a longer tale unfold.
For six and thirty years it now has stood,
Wielding its influence for the public good,
Our twenty-seven annual fairs have all
Been seasons of reunion at this hall;
During the years of war, these walls have rung
With patriotic words to stir the young;
And many a brave youth, registering his name,
Went forth to take his chance of death and fame;
And during great political campaigns,
That tried men's souls, and sometimes turned their

brains,
These walls have echoed many a fierce oration,
Big with the fate of freedom and the nation.
Now as to lectures, musicals and shows,
Let younger generations tell of those,
Their recollections cover, like our own,
Persons and things of every shade and tone,—
From highest thoughts to which the soul aspires,
To "that Comical Brown," and Flora Myers;
From Greeley, Robert Collyer and Kate Stanton,
Down to the juggler and the magic lantern.
We've only proud and cheering words to say,
Touching the status of affairs to-day.
Here's our old institution sound and strong,
And likely to endure for e'er so long,
Able to pay off all our liabilities,
And add more to our library facilities.
Our books increased so fast that, to keep pace,

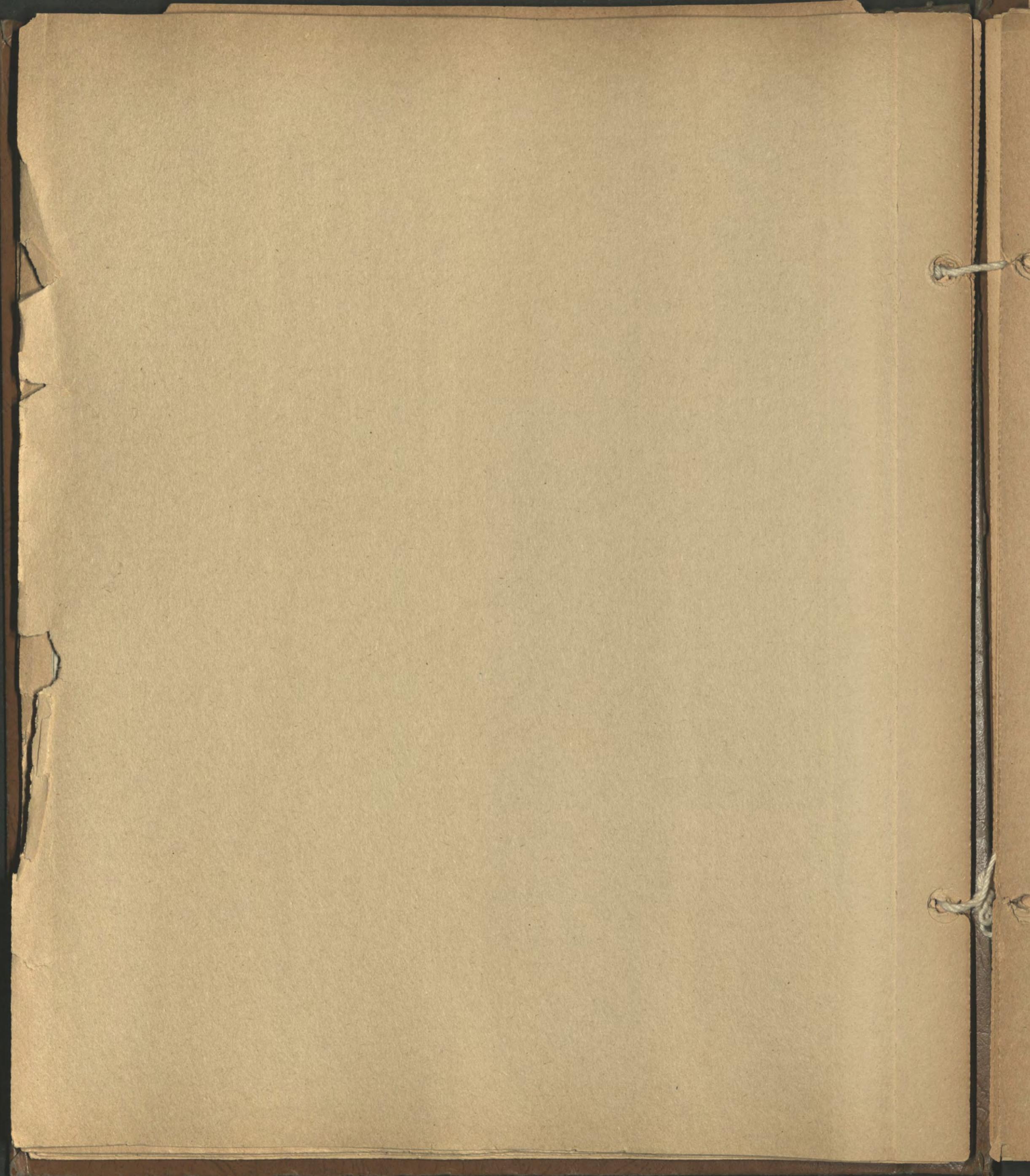
We felt the need of an increase of space,
The library requiring a whole floor,
And now more popular than e'er before,
While summer visitors at small expense,
May gratify the intellectual sense.
We've renovated and improved this hall,
And the condition of the ceiling wall
No longer need disturb us in our beds
With fear lest it might tumble on our heads;
And all the arrangements will be sure to please
The eye and taste,—except the old settees.
The wonders of the museum collection
Fail not to court each visitor's inspection,
Thought to us natives rather an old story,
They tell the stranger of our former glory;
He scans the relics o'er with curious gaze,
And puts strange queries touching those old days;
Wonders what such outlandish things can be,
And why we should use camels on the sea;
Whether the camels killed the whales? And how?
And why our people don't go whaling now?
Thus putting the custodian's brain to rack
To find the straw that broke the camel's back;
Then tells his friends, "that janitor in there
Has got more jaw than can be found elsewhere."
But learns there are some things in heaven and
earth
Quite new to him—and gets his money's worth.

What of the future? "Tis for us to cherish
Our Atheneum, that it shall not perish,
But stronger grow from year to year and greater,
Regarded as a sort of Alma Mater,
Deserving filial love from each and all,
Three generations hearken to the call.
Feeling the love and reverence that we owe,
Let's teach our children in the faith to grow.
Next to our schools our Atheneum is prized;
Its founders' names are ever canonized
In grateful hearts. We build their mausoleum
In keeping up their work, our Atheneum.

Mar. 3, 1883

The Atheneum Committee have placed six new "constant ventilators" into as many of the windows of Atheneum Hall, which fact will be read with pleasure by many of the lecture and playgoers. They are placed in the upper (middle) pane, and are made similar to a wheel. From their formation they act upon the principle of a propeller, throwing the air in every direction, thus obviating the injurious effects of a solid body of air entering in a direct line. This demonstrates its superiority to an opened window or other aperture, as the fresh air is gradually diffused instead of being introduced in such a manner as to occasion personal discomfort. The peculiar feature of its operation obviates all liability to taking cold from the material reduction of temperature, which frequently occurs during the night time, as the change is imperceptibly made. The continuous action of the ventilator can always be relied upon.

1876



Foster a Public Benefit.

Among all the public benefits of our town, there is one in which we ought to take peculiar pride. We refer to the Nantucket Atheneum Library. Despite all adverse influences, among many changes in the business prospects of our township, the Atheneum has stood, yearly growing in favor with many of our best citizens at home and abroad. To underrate its literary value in a community like our own would be suicidal. There are few of our large New England towns that can boast of a library equal to our own; none may claim more renown on account of the names of those who help sustain such important institutions. The late Hon. Alfred Macy was President of our Atheneum for a long period, and he gave its truest interests an impetus which its faithful executive officers feel to-day.

Will our readers glance with us at some of the famous sources from which the Atheneum library has received donations from time to time. From Prof. Edward North, of Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y., valuable reading matter donated; from Prof. Maria Mitchell, of Vassar College, N. Y.; from the Boston Public Library; also Summary of Christian Doctrines, as held by the Society of Friends; interesting pamphlets from Mrs. H. A. Zell of Philadelphia; volumes from the Smithsonian Institute, &c. There is in the library "A Memorial of Charles Sumner, printed by order of the Massachusetts Legislature," the gift of the late President Macy, and ten volumes from Miss D. L. Dix, not to mention other liberal bequests. A large sum of money was given to our Atheneum by Hon. George B. Upton, who in life, was such an honor to the business centre of Nantucket.

The very efficient librarian, Miss Sara Barnard, reports 10,061 volumes in circulation, 4,903 in the library. There have been added by purchase, 163 books, 24 by donation; 1716 pamphlets; 144 added as periodicals, 56 by donation. Miss Barnard says that the library continues in a prosperous condition. Among the many books bought, are Appleton's new edition of "The American Encyclopaedia," and standard works on Art. The arrangement for allowing summer visitors to take books from the library, has given entire satisfaction to the strangers who express their appreciation of our literary repository, and the curiosities of the museum. Then, too, the financial basis is sound, the Treasurer reporting hundreds of dollars balance in favor of the Nantucket Atheneum. By reason of wise management, all proprietors are privileged to attend an annual course of lectures furnished at mere nominal rates. Long live the good influences and measure of instruction flowing directly from the excellent library connected with the Nantucket Atheneum.

For The Inquirer and Mirror. Free Public Library.

Mr. Editor:

I understand that at the coming annual Town Meeting the voters will be asked to take some action looking to the establishment of a free public library, if possible, with the co-operation of the Atheneum, by the adoption of such measures as may induce that institution to abolish the small fee now charged and throw open its doors to the public. Such a step, I am authoritatively informed, will not necessitate the trustees of the Atheneum parting with or even sharing the control and management of the library, while in the benefits which will accrue, not only the public, but the library itself will share largely.

I do not purpose to enter into arguments here, which I trust will be soably presented at the proper time and place by others interested as to convince *all* of the wisdom and desirability of the proposed measure; but I am authorized to say, after conference with the parties, that certain persons prominent in literary and educational work, and actuated wholly by philanthropic motives, are so desirous of having the citizens of Nantucket enjoy the unrestricted benefits and advantages of a free public library, as to stand ready to tender their financial co-operation to that end, even, if need be, to assist in founding a new library, independent of the Atheneum. It is to be hoped, however, that no necessity for such a movement may exist after the subject has been intelligently presented and considered, but that *all* may be inspired by a singleness of purpose to aid in hastening the desired result. A plan will be submitted whereby, with the co-operation of the Town and the Atheneum, the library of the latter may be opened to the public without charge to the individual, and provision be made at the same time to fully compensate the institution for the loss of revenue ensuing. But of this and the beneficent results to be anticipated a detailed consideration will be in order later.

Nantucket stands today one of seven towns only in the Commonwealth without a free public library, and is conspicuous as being not only the largest and richest, but *by far* the largest and richest of the seven—a distinction hardly a matter of pride to a town which has ranked among the foremost municipalities of the state in the literary attainments of its sons and daughters. Let us unite and co-operate to wipe out this distinction.

ARTHUR H. GARDNER.

Feb. 5, 1900

Atheneum Begins 51st Year As Nantucket's "Public Library."

As one of Nantucket's most popular institutions, the Nantucket Atheneum has served the island and its people on a year-round basis for over a century. The present structure on the corner of Lower India and Federal streets, was built in 1847, and was placed on the site of the original library building, burned during the fire of 1846. Incorporated in 1834—having been launched from a combination of the Nantucket Mechanics' Social Library Association and the Columbian Library Society in 1827—the Atheneum is still privately controlled.

At the town meeting of 1900, it was voted to either found a free public library or to induce the Atheneum to open its doors to the public on a free basis. The Atheneum had constituted the main library for the people of Nantucket since its inception in 1834. While the free public library system in most of the towns of the state had, by town appropriations, gradually swept many similar institutions into

Obituary.

On Sunday last Death claimed for his own Sarah Frances Barnard, eldest daughter of the late Cromwell and Susan R. Barnard. Miss Barnard was well known to both resident and summer population through her connection with the Nantucket Atheneum library as librarian, which position she was compelled to relinquish the past spring, owing to ill health, after a faithful and most efficient service covering a period of a half century. She succeeded the late Prof. Maria Mitchell in this office, and gave her undivided efforts to the duties of her position, and was appealed to constantly as an authority in literary matters. Our correspondents in another column pay a deserved tribute to her glorious character and high moral worth, which we sincerely endorse, and so completely have they laid tribute that we can add nothing to the merited words. Miss Barnard was beloved, and in attestation of this kindly regard, her friends in large numbers assembled in Unitarian church on Wednesday, where the Rev. Edward Day conducted funeral services, with appropriate selections by the choir. Three sisters survive Miss Barnard, to whom the tender sympathy of a bereaved community goes forth in full measure.

Sept. 11, 1906

The original library building was erected as a Universalist Church and for several years was the scene of eloquent sermons preached by Rev. George Bradburn. After its destruction by the fire, the Atheneum's trustees decided to build the new library in the same architectural design as the original structure, and, utilizing a pen and ink sketch made by Samuel Jenks, the present building was constructed.

In 1899, the interior of the library was remodelled, and steel stacks replaced the alcove arrangement of the books. A card catalogue system was introduced and the books re-arranged completely and re-catalogued. The present Librarian, Miss Clara Parker, was an invaluable aid to Mrs. S. A. C. Bond, the expert who came down from Boston, to do the work at this time. On Jan. 1, 1900, the cards totalled 10,500 in the new cases.

Miss Sarah F. Barnard, who was the Librarian in 1900, wrote an interesting and valuable short history of the Atheneum at this time, which she concluded with the following paragraph:

"The Nantucket Atheneum has ever been a power of good in our community, whose influence has not been confined to the proprietors alone, but has been far-reaching in its effects. By wise and judicious management, it has been carried safely through the 'storm and stress' into peaceful waters, and the future has a hopeful outlook. We trust its many friends and patrons will extend their generous support. The day is not far distant when we, who have had its interests so near our hearts, must trim our sails for the voyage to the 'undiscovered country,' beyond this earthly bourne, but we know that when the time comes for us to lay down the pleasant burden, there will be willing hearts and hands to carry on the good work."

Miss Barnard was the successor of the famous astronomer Maria Mitchell, who served as librarian during the period when it emerged from the ruins of the "Great Fire" to become the new Atheneum.

Miss Clara Parker, the present librarian, took over her duties in 1906, and has thus served 44 years. The Assistant Librarian, Mrs. Isabel Coffin Gibbs, has also a long period of service behind her, having been Miss Parker's companion at the big library desk for over thirty years.

Sept. 11, 1906

When the library was re-opened on Feb. 1, 1847, it contained 1,600 volumes. A committee soliciting contributions for the Museum was able to get together an interesting collection, but the original museum, containing as it did many documents and logbooks of inestimable historic value, as well as many items brought home from distant parts of the world by island shipmasters, could never be replaced.

A combination of museum and library occupied the lower floor of the Atheneum for many years, with the upper floor being the lecture hall. Over the years it was aided by the efforts of its directors and interested patrons, with David Joy, William Hadwen, George B. Upton, Mrs. Eliza Nevins and Fred Sanford contributing vitally needed aid.

REOPENING OF THE ATHENEUM—*Olio Entertainment.*—The Atheneum building was reopened to the public Monday evening, a general invitation being extended to our people to examine the improvements which have been made in the library and new reading room, as well as the museum, which was quite generally availed of, the extension—or reading room—being the greatest object of interest. This room, which has been known as the West Room, has been fitted with spacious alcoves and shelves for books, and a large reading table placed in the centre, which patrons of the institution will find a great convenience. A spacious doorway has been cut through the north wall, leading to the library proper. The desk of the librarian has been transferred to the west end of the library room and surrounded by a neat and substantial counter, and both rooms look bright and fresh in a dress of new paint.

In the upper hall an entertainment was given for the benefit of the library, which drew out a large house. This hall has undergone improvements, having been thoroughly cleaned and painted, new ventilators put in the ceiling, and the stage treated to a new, neat carpet. The walls at the rear and side of the stage were adorned with portraits of men who had been closely identified with the Atheneum in various ways, and the entire room bore a refreshing appearance. The evening's programme was full of good things, and opened with an instrumental selection for violin and piano, "Marcia de Figaro," by Mr. John W. Hallett and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Mary E. Starbuck recited beautifully "Ode to the Atheneum," written by Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck. Miss Emma Cook sang with sweet grace "O, Give Me a Home by the Sea," Miss Susie E. Brock playing the accompaniment. An address, "Invisible Portraits," the production of Dr. Arthur E. Jenks, was an excellent paper, embracing tender tributes to several of the parties represented in the portraits upon the walls, and to many of the prominent poets and lecturers who had in former years graced the stage of the institution—such men as Rev. John Pierpont, John G. Saxe, Wendell Phillips, George Sumner, Rev. Henry Giles, Horace Greeley, Park Benjamin, Rev. William R. Alger, Rev. T. Starr King, Thoreau, Prof. Silliman, and Hon. William Mitchell. The treatment of the subject was suggested while reading the preface of an elegant volume in the Atheneum Library, entitled, "Biographical Encyclopaedia of Massachusetts of the Nineteenth Century." The book was the thoughtful and liberal bequest of the late Charles G. Coffin, one of the founders of the Atheneum, and many years its honored president. Dr. Jenks was warmly encored at the conclusion of his remarks. A duet, "Gently Sighs the Breeze," was very sweetly rendered by Mr. B. G. Tobey and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Emma Cartwright added greatly to the laurels she has already won, in the recitation of "The Death Bridge of the Tay," which she recited most admirably, holding the audience in breathless silence, and portraying the dark and bright sides of the poem in a vivid manner, which called forth a round of applause as she finished. Mr. John W. Hallett followed with a bass solo, "The Tempest," which was finely rendered. An original poem, by William H. Macy, Esq., which embodied a brief history of the old and new Atheneum buildings, with happy hits, was very happily read by Miss Stella L. Chase. A song "Hide and Seek," by Miss Emma Cook, was charmingly sung. Allen Coffin, Esq., addressed the audience brief-

ly, naming the portraits, and presenting to the audience the propriety of a liberal support of an institution which has done and will do so much good in this community. A selection for violin and piano, by Mr. Hallett and Miss Cook, completed the evening's entertainment, which was a success in every way, netting a snug little sum for the benefit of the library. We print below, by request, the poem of Mr. Macy.

Our Atheneum.

With loyal hearts responsive to the call, We meet again within this dear old hall, And cheerfully our modest efforts lend To serve the interests of a dear old friend, To aid our Atheneum, so highly prized, Braving all risk of being criticised. With music, speech and song we meet to-night, And surely it would seem but just and right To call up, in this rhyming contribution, The story of so good an institution. Previous to eighteen hundred thirty-four, (I cannot say how many years before, Nor would it matter even if I could,) Upon this site a house of worship stood. I well remember its appearance then, Though but a little urchin less than ten; And as no sign-board c'er escaped my search, On this I read, First Universalist Church; Also a date printed in letters Roman, This I recall because 'twas so uncommon. But what is such vague recollection good for, Since now I can't tell what those letters stood for; As to the edifice, I must allow, Its general form was much like this one now; No lofty tower or spire towards heaven reached, But here the Reverend George Bradburn preached. I heard him once, once only, I believe, Gaining for just once the parental leave. Our Quaker birthright told us it was wrong To worship God with music and with song; But I confess a feeling of delight, To find that there were those who thought it right. The world moved on, and soon there came a day When Universalism didn't pay; Or else 'twas something else, it doesn't matter, Whether it was the former or the latter. If I digress, my story'll ne'er be told, And so, one day, I heard the church was sold. The United Library Association, Doing a good work for our civilization, Counted some noble men within its ranks, To whom we owe to-night our grateful thanks. Coffin and Joy are honored above all. Their portraits, side by side, adorn the wall, And grateful memories in our minds suggest, Though they have passed on to their final rest. These men with generous sums to head the list, Found others prompt and willing to assist; Losing no time, at their great work they went, Building up for themselves a monument; Leaving results to us which, when we are gone, Will stand for generations yet unborn. Thus a foundation being firmly laid, A building purchased, certain changes made To fit it for the purposes designed, To elevate the human heart and mind. The hall when started quickly onward rolled, And thus we heard that the old church was sold. New books were purchased, Old ones freely given, By eager hands the work was pushed and driven. The precious volumes, starting from a few, Quickly to hundreds, then to thousands grew, And readers old and young being thus allured, The library became a thing assured. A museum, too, was soon success to win, For contributions rare came pouring in, All the queer things in nature and in art, All climates, all lands and oceans bore their part. Our men in those days dug wealth from the seas, O'er the wide world their canvas woode the breeze. Old sailors from long voyages returned, Enjoyed the rest they had so bravely earned, And, as might be supposed, these stout sea-kings Had brought home many strange and curious things, And these, when brought together for inspection, Made up a rare and valuable collection. The lecture room formed an important part In the grand programme from the very start. Courses of lectures were inaugurated, Keeping the public interest unabated. Home talent for the most part was employed, Large audiences applauded and enjoyed. Yet of those old discourses we must say, How different from the lectures of to-day! All the world did not travel then as now, On railroad trains,—because they knew not how. Progress in later days has pushed aside The things with which our sires were satisfied. The simple battery and Voltaic pile, So strange in those days, now would raise a smile; Wonderful things with which they were beguiled, Have now become but playthings for the child; Lecturers now would look for small returns, For things which every high-school urchin learns. He knows that none would go into ecstasies Over a long discourse on hydrostatics. Imagine grown folks listening calm and placid, Learning how vitriol is sulphuric acid; How it requires six planes to bound a cube, And what is meant by the pneumatic tube! With the dimensions of Earth, Mars and Venus, And what the distance is in miles between us! Science, compared with what she can show, Was but an infant fifty years ago. None knew of Darwin then nor Herbert Spencer, But wondrous were the air-pump and condenser. But yet the picture has another side, Which makes us think of the old hall with pride. What moral ideas found expression there! How many young reforms can witness bear

Of the slow growth of right and common sense, Helped on by good impressions sent out thence? There friends of education held convention, Discussing points too numerous to mention; Discarding old and building up new rules, Seeking to raise the standard of our schools. There anti-slavery champions sometimes dared To raise their protest for which few then cared, Except to sneer; but later, all admired The force of strong conviction that inspired The courage shown by those few pioneers,— So marvellous the change in twenty years! And when the Washingtonian reform Swept o'er the country like a driving storm, I heard the voice of "old John Hawkins" ring, Warning us all 'gainst the accursed thing. That storm passed o'er; 'tis sad to think that men Need his rude eloquence now, even as then. "Laughing gas" made us fun in that dear hall; Now, utilized, it yields no fun at all; 'Twas there we first saw "subjects" mesmerized, And then concluded we'd been victimized; There Henry Wright preached universal peace, With faith that wars and human strife would cease; And Graham, with his vegetable diet, Making small gains, and still less converts by it. But why go on? this sort of retrospective Carries me always in the same direction. Queer episodes in youth and boyhood all Associate themselves with that old hall. So, by a grateful people prized and nourished, Through twelve bright years our Atheneum flourished; Its library had grown to fill the shelves; Some of the books were fortunes in themselves. The queer things to the museum attached, In certain specialties could scarce be matched By any in the land. Disaster came; Our Atheneum went up in smoke and flame! Yet not alone, 'twas on that fatal day, When hundreds saw their savings swept away Before the all-devouring fiery blast, Undoing all the labors of the past. 'Tis idle to attempt to estimate Our loss in dollars, when relentless fate Snatches away from us, as in this case, Things which no money ever can replace; There are some things that money cannot do; 'Twas those old things we wanted, not the new. But yet our Atheneum rose once more; The building handsomer than c'er before Rose Phoenix-like just where the old one stood, To wield through all these years a power for good, More precious far than jewels in our sight, The very house in which we meet to-night. A generous gift of books sent from abroad (The fact should give us pleasure to record), Served as a nucleus to build upon. More were soon added, and the fight was won. 'Twas not so easy to begin again Collecting curious things from o'er the main; No one could duplicate those things destroyed; A museum room seemed like an aching void. Besides, things were not as they used to be; The times had changed, and so, forsooth, had we. Our fleet of shipping grew, we must confess, "Small by degrees, and beautifully less;" Our dear old business destined was to fail, Owing to the great scarcity of whale, And smaller prices for the few we got, The California mania, and what not, Until of ships and active men bereft, No mariners, but old worn-out ones, left. The emigrant picked up what it could collect, And is to-day all that we should expect. But jolly P. T. Barnum tells his readers To run a museum you must have feeders. Our Atheneum felt the stern decline, Languished, like things in every other line; Its finances at times ran very low, It seemed at times to be but touch and go; No new books added, the few paying shares Scarcely affording income for repairs. Rewards come sometimes to the patient waiter, So now and then some generous testator, By timely gift, has helped us through the year, And brought down blessings on his memory dear. Still holding on through all the ups and downs, Still striving, whether fortune smiles or frowns, A three days' fair held thirteen years ago, Built up our funds, then running very low, And though by no means richly we're endowed, Yet now that every summer brings a crowd, This helps to swell our modest income more, And whispers of still brighter days in store. The story of the old hall has been told, But this one can a longer tale unfold. For six and thirty years it now has stood, Wielding its influence for the public good, Our twenty-seven annual fairs have all Been seasons of reunion at this hall; During the years of war, these walls have rung With patriotic words to stir the young; And many a brave youth, registering his name, Went forth to take his chance of death and fame; And during great political campaigns, That tried men's souls, and sometimes turned their brains, These walls have echoed many a fierce oration, Big with the fate of freedom and the nation. Now as to lectures, musicals and shows, Let younger generations tell of those, Their recollections cover, like our own, Persons and things of every shade and tone,— From highest thoughts to which the soul aspires, To "that Comical Brown," and Flora Myers; From Greeley, Robert Collyer and Kate Stanton, Down to the juggler and the magic lantern. We're only proud and cheering words to say, Touching the status of affairs to-day. Here's our old institution sound and strong, And likely to endure for c'er so long, Able to pay off all our liabilities, And add more to our library facilities. Our books increased so fast that, to keep pace, We felt the need of an increase of space; The library requiring a whole floor, And now more popular than c'er before, While summer visitors at small expense, May gratify the intellectual sense.

We've renovated and improved this hall, And the condition of the ceiling wall No longer need disturb us in our beds With fear lest it might tumble on our heads; And all the arrangements will be sure to please The eye and taste,—except the old settees. The wonders of the museum collection Fail not to court each visitor's inspection, Though to us natives rather an old story, They tell the stranger of our former glory; He scans the relics o'er with curious gaze, And puts strange queries touching those old days; Wonders what such outlandish things can be, And why we should use camels on the sea; Whether the camels killed the whales? And how? And why our people don't go whaling now? Thus putting the custodian's brain to rack To find the straw that broke the camel's back; Then tells his friends, "that janitor in there Has got more jaw than can be found elsewhere," But learns there are some things in heaven and earth Quite new to him—and gets his money's worth.

What of the future? 'Tis for us to cherish Our Atheneum, that it shall not perish, But stronger grow from year to year and greater, Regarded as a sort of Alma Mater, Deserving filial love from each and all, Three generations hearken to the call, Feeling the love and reverence that we owe, Let's teach our children in the faith to grow. Next to our schools our Atheneum is prized; Its founders' names are ever canonized In grateful hearts. We build their mausoleum In keeping up their work, our Atheneum.

March 3, 1883

THE ATHENEUM. By referring to our advertising columns, it will be seen that the library of this Institution will be open to-day, for the delivery of books. Principally through the kindness of friends abroad, there are now upon the shelves more than eighteen hundred volumes, all in good order, and among them many whole sets of exceedingly valuable publications. The library room is fitted up with great taste, neatness and good judgment, and there is shelf-room for about four thousand volumes.

The lecture room is all that could be desired.—It is over nineteen feet high, arched, well proportioned, and will seat comfortably more than six hundred persons. The rostrum is so placed that the speaker can be seen about equally well by his whole audience, and we are assured that all will be able to hear without difficulty. It is furnished with settees instead of fixed seats,—a great improvement upon the old lecture room; a beautiful chandelier is suspended in the centre,—indeed, the entire hall is finished and furnished throughout, in a manner which does great credit to the builders and the directing committee.

We are informed that, when all is done and the bills collected, the Corporation will be about fifteen hundred dollars in debt. Now is the time for such of the stockholders as have the means, to manifest their liberality,—to imitate the example set them, some years ago, by two of the proprietors, and, more recently, by the generous friends abroad who have done so much to refurbish the shelves of their library. More than a thousand dollars worth of valuable books have been sent to the Institution by comparative strangers, and it now remains for individuals here to complete the good work which others have so greatly advanced.

The regular income of the Atheneum is needed, every dollar of it, to purchase new books, in order that the deficiencies in the library may be supplied as soon as possible. Let this debt be allowed to become an incumbrance on the Institution, and years must elapse before the library can be at all enlarged. It would be greatly to be lamented, if, when others have done so much for the Atheneum, the members should now neglect to do something for themselves. They would blush to have it known abroad, should they allow this debt to remain unpaid.

But we presume that no such thing will take place, that all incumbrances will be cleared away at once, and the Institution sent on its way rejoicing. We understand that a committee has been raised to solicit donations, and we have no doubt that, when that Committee reports, it will be found that the stockholders have done the proper thing.

Feb. 1, 1847

Abram Quary and His Portrait.

By Miss Grace Brown Gardner.

For several months recently visitors to the Atheneum Library have missed the well-known portrait of Abram Quary. It now hangs in its accustomed place on the south wall of the main room, near the door of the reading room. The canvas has been stretched and thoroughly cleaned, and the frame repaired. Details of the picture, which were obscured by the dust and grime of many years, now stand out clear and colorful. The restoration was done by Alfred Jakstas of Boston, after consultation with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Little is known of the artist, except that her name was Mrs. Dassell and that she was of French extraction. At the time that the portrait was painted the present reading room was used as a studio by the late George G. Fish, and the finishing touches were done in that room and the portrait presented to the Atheneum by Mrs. Dassell.

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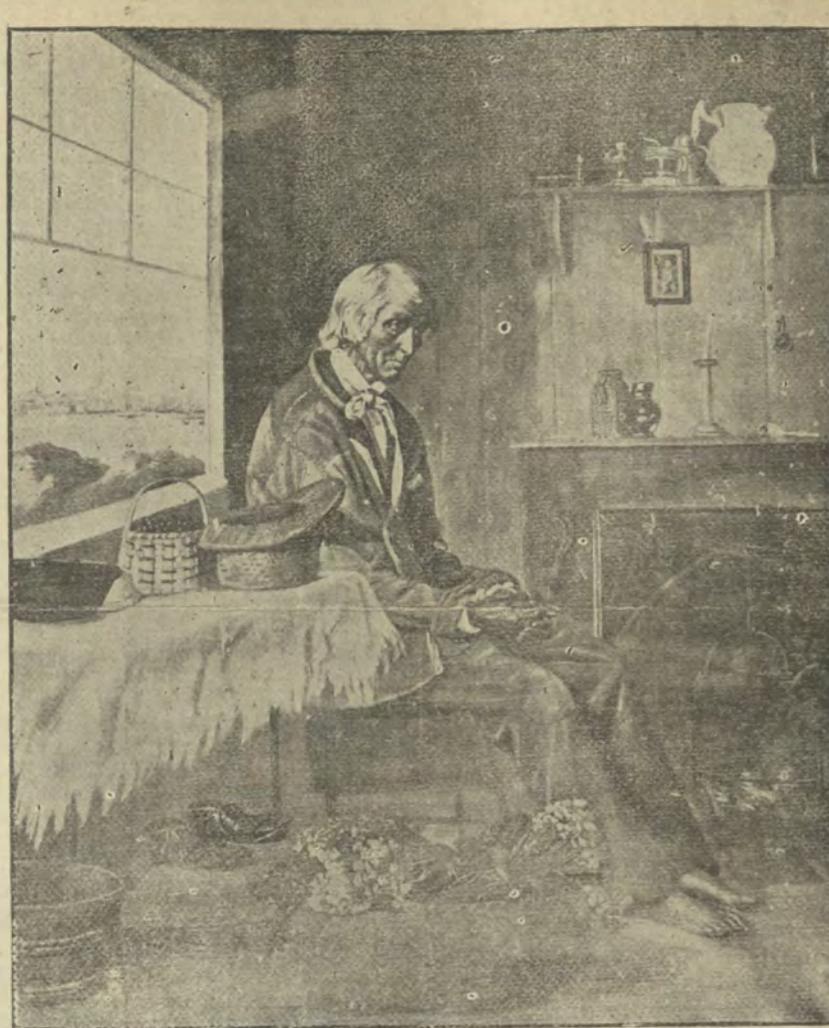
Abram Quary seems to have been something of an enigma during his lifetime, and the various stories which have been associated with his name since his death have passed into the realm of legendry. All agree that he was the last male representative of the race of Nantucket Indians, but beyond that there is a wide difference of opinion.

An article by the well-known Nantucket historian, Benjamin Franklin Folger, dated 'Sconset 1854, is perhaps the most authentic account. In it he states that the mother of Abram Quary was Sarah Quary, the daughter of Joseph, whose wigwam was on the west side of Sesachacha Pond. Joseph Quary was a leader among his people, and his daughter was noted for her skill in the construction of baskets and other handiwork common to the Indians.

In early life Abram was placed in the home of Stephen Chase, where he continued for many years. He was always distant and reserved with strangers, but friendly with his acquaintances. On a visit to Mr. Folger in 'Sconset he amused himself by making for a present a basket of beach grass which was in good preservation at the time the article was written.

Picnic parties to his home on Abram's Point were very popular. When he was at home and in the proper mood he would raise a flag near his dwelling to show that guests were welcome. It was very necessary, however, for all visitors to be deferential to his peculiarities, and idle questions were not in order.

Mr. Folger attempted a year or two before Abram's death to learn from his own lips concerning his early life and ancestry, but the subject seemed displeasing and "Abram's already decided taciturnity had run into obstinacy" and the attempt brought no results.



NANTUCKET ATHENEUM'S PORTRAIT OF ABRAM QUARY BY MRS. DASSELL.
Last male Nantucket Indian, who died Nov. 25, 1854, in his 83rd year.

In an interview published in the Boston Sunday Globe in 1910, Mr. Folger speaks of Abram Quary as a lone man, dignified but very poor, who gained his living by picking berries and gathering herbs and doing odd jobs. He spoke of Monomoy as the site of his cabin. He tells a story of some relic hunters who went to Monomoy and began digging at the graves of the Indians buried there. Abram got his gun and went after them. He was arrested and brought into court. His plea that they were disturbing the graves of his ancestors appealed to the court and he was discharged with a mild reprimand.

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Quite different is the account given by R. A. Douglas-Lithgow, who wrote

a pamphlet on Nantucket Indians, as well as devoting much space to them in his book "Nantucket: A History". In this book he speaks of Quary as a half-breed who was the son of Judith Quary, also a half-breed and a fortune teller, and the notorious Indian Quibby who was hanged for the murder of Harry Gardner.

This story also is found in the book "Miriam Coffin," by Col. Joseph C. Hart, published in 1834. Judith Quary is pictured in somewhat livid colors, as the fortune teller who predicted dire futures for two of the characters in that famous novel.

* * * * *

Capt. Richard Swain in 1911 writes from Shanghai, China, giving his boyish recollections of Abram Quady—as he spells it. He says that Quady lived at Shimmo on land belonging to his grandfather, Hezekiah Swain.

Each spring his grandfather plowed land for a small garden where Quady raised a few vegetables. He also collected and dried herbs. Capt. Swain describes the interior of Quady's house, his description agreeing closely with the Atheneum picture. He states that the year before his death friends persuaded Quady to go to the almshouse, where he could receive better care than in the little house at Shimmo. A few years later, the house was burned down.

* * * * *

Dorcas Honorable, the last full-blooded Indian, also died at the almshouse the following year. She was the last of her race.

[Dorcas Honorable was born April 27, 1776. Her father was Isaac Earop and her mother Sarah Tashma.] ..

* * * * *

In that same year—1911—a lady writes the editor of *The Inquirer and Mirror* in order to correct the date of Abram Quary's death. She said she talked with him in 1857 in the house of Franklin Murphey wife's mother. And she is positive concerning the date. The editor very diplomatically prints her entire communication, but adds that *The Inquirer and Mirror* of the 27th of November, 1854, records the death of Quary as occurring the previous Saturday morning at the age of eighty-two years.

* * * * *

William Crosby Bennett, a frequent contributor to the columns of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, writes under the caption of "Legends and Stories of Nantucket" in the issue of August 16, 1947, that in his youth Quary, like so many of his red brothers, followed the sea and was known as a faithful hand upon a whaler. "Later he became the prince of Nantucket caterers, and without his assistance no evening entertainment was deemed quite complete." He had a lonely old age, his wife and all his children dying before him.

* * * * *

In the "Doings of the Nantucket Historico-Genealogical Society" for November 2, 1872, there is an article by the well-known Rev. Phebe A. Hanaford. It discusses the religious history of Nantucket Indians. She does not know whether Abraham (for she uses the full name) Quary was ever connected with any church, but speaks of having at one time a short conversation with him on religious subjects in which he spoke of his child who died a sad casualty and "expressed sorrowful yet Christian submission to the Divine will."

* * * * *

In these various accounts of the subject of the historic Atheneum portrait, one fact stands out clearly: all agree that the dignity and pathos which the artist has so clearly indicated were in truth the attributes of Abram Quary, a man who was respected by all as the last male survivor of the Indians of Nantucket.

Abram Quary.

It is interesting to know that as soon as the hall on the second floor of the Atheneum is again made usable the pictures downstairs will be placed there. Owing to lack of space and light I think many people have never realized their value and beauty.

Mrs. Raynor M. Gardiner, in the Mirror of January 21, gave a splendid and very illuminating description of the Chinese paintings which are one of the Association's most valuable possessions.

Among the portraits is that of Abram Quary, the last Nantucket Indian, the "Man of Sorrow", who was never known to smile after the death of his wife and child.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner has written a very interesting description of him and his portrait which was painted by a Mrs. Dassell (of French extraction) and presented to the Atheneum by her. It is said the portrait was finished in what is now the reading room, used then as a studio by George G. Fish, a Nantucket artist.

There are many stories about Abram Quary. He lived alone in a cabin on the Shimmo shore now called Abram's Point, earned his living by odd jobs, selling berries, and collected herbs.

My interest in him came from stories my mother told me. My grandfather was Nathaniel A. Sprague, a Nantucket merchant with two stores on Centre Street (burned in the fire). Their home was on the corner of Fair Street and Ray's Court, where Dr. Walker lives now, and that is where my mother saw Abram Quary when he came to see her father and bring his earnings for him to deposit in the bank.

He always brought a gift, some berries, or a fish. My mother watched him as he sat on the back porch and waited for Grandpa to come and her child's heart was touched by the sadness and she never forgot it.

I am proud to be a "Proprietor". I inherited my space from my aunt, Miss Harriet Elkins. I want to thank Mr. Jelleme and all who are engaged in "preserving and improving" our fine old Atheneum.

May the good work go on.
Grace Elkins Hutaaff



DORCAS HONORABLE

The last of the Nantucket Indians, who died on Jan. 12, 1855, aged 79.

Valuable Chinese Paintings At Atheneum.

By Mrs. Raynor M. Gardiner

As the work of preserving and improving the Atheneum proceeds, the second floor will provide space for the exhibition of the Chinese pictures, as well as many other valuable items treasured by the Atheneum.

Above five shelves of books in the children's corner hangs (or rather, leans, for there is hardly room for it to hang) a large picture of a Chinese garden. The painting is about five feet long by three and a half feet high. The greens, reds and blues are as bright as if the artist had painted it last year and not early in the XIX century. There is none of the suggestive subtlety that we are accustomed to in Chinese art. The bridge, the pagoda, the blossoming plants are all meticulously drawn and painted.

This picture is one of a set of six Chinese paintings of Houqua's garden willed to the Atheneum by Mr. Frederick Sanford, whose portrait hangs in the Atheneum reading room. Three others are hung above the novels, and two are not shown. Mr. Sanford was born in Nantucket, and after he retired from his San Francisco post as shipping agent for the New York firm of A. A. Low & Co., he came back to Nantucket and lived for many years in the big white house on the corner of Broad and Federal Streets.

In San Francisco he traded with the Far East, and the story goes that he told the captains of the ships of Low and Co. to bring him back some Chinese paintings. The ship paintings now hung in the Atheneum and the six paintings of Houqua's garden came home to Nantucket with Mr. Sanford and were hung in his house. He willed them all to the Atheneum.

The great Chinese merchant, Houqua, was the richest and most powerful of all the Chinese who traded with the foreigners in Canton. Until 1842, the waterfront in Canton was the only place where the Chinese would allow "foreign devils" to set foot. All the Chinese business with the world outside was transacted there. Houqua's gardens were famous for

their beauty, great size, and charming arrangement. There were walks, teahouses, bridges over streams, and terraces. In one of the Atheneum paintings, Chinese ladies are playing badminton.

Although the Chinese artists did not sign their paintings, sometimes there was a stamp, a sort of stencil, on the back, with the name of the artist. The Atheneum paintings are not signed. Often a well-established Chinese artist would have a large studio, and employ lesser-known artists to work for him. In the Peabody Museum, in Salem, there is a small wash drawing which carefully depicts such a studio. One can see a large rectangular room, the walls hung with small pictures, sometimes five copies of the same picture in a row. At five tables five Chinese artists are painting; one of the tables resembles a lady's dressing table with a mirror. A servant in the background is entering with a tea tray. All is diligence and order.

It may be that these paintings of Houqua's gardens were done in this way under the supervision of a well-known master.

The Metropolitan Museum of New York hung two of this set of six in their beautiful loan exhibition, "The Chinese Trade and Its Influence," in 1941. A report of this exhibition is in the files of the Atheneum.

Mr. Edouard Stackpole, curator of the Marine Historical Association, of Mystic, Connecticut, says that the filigree frames of native wood, carved in a charming pattern, are interesting for themselves. There are some excellent examples of such frames in the Museum in Mystic.

Many of us who have had long association with the Atheneum are happy in the prospect that these charming Chinese pictures will soon be hung where they will have good light and give pleasure to all who see them.

Jan. 21, 1956



**Carving of Abram Quary
Given Atheneum**

Facing the famous portrait of Abram Quary in the Nantucket Atheneum there now hangs an excellent bas relief of the portrait which was recently presented to the library by Mrs. George Lister Carlisle, Jr.

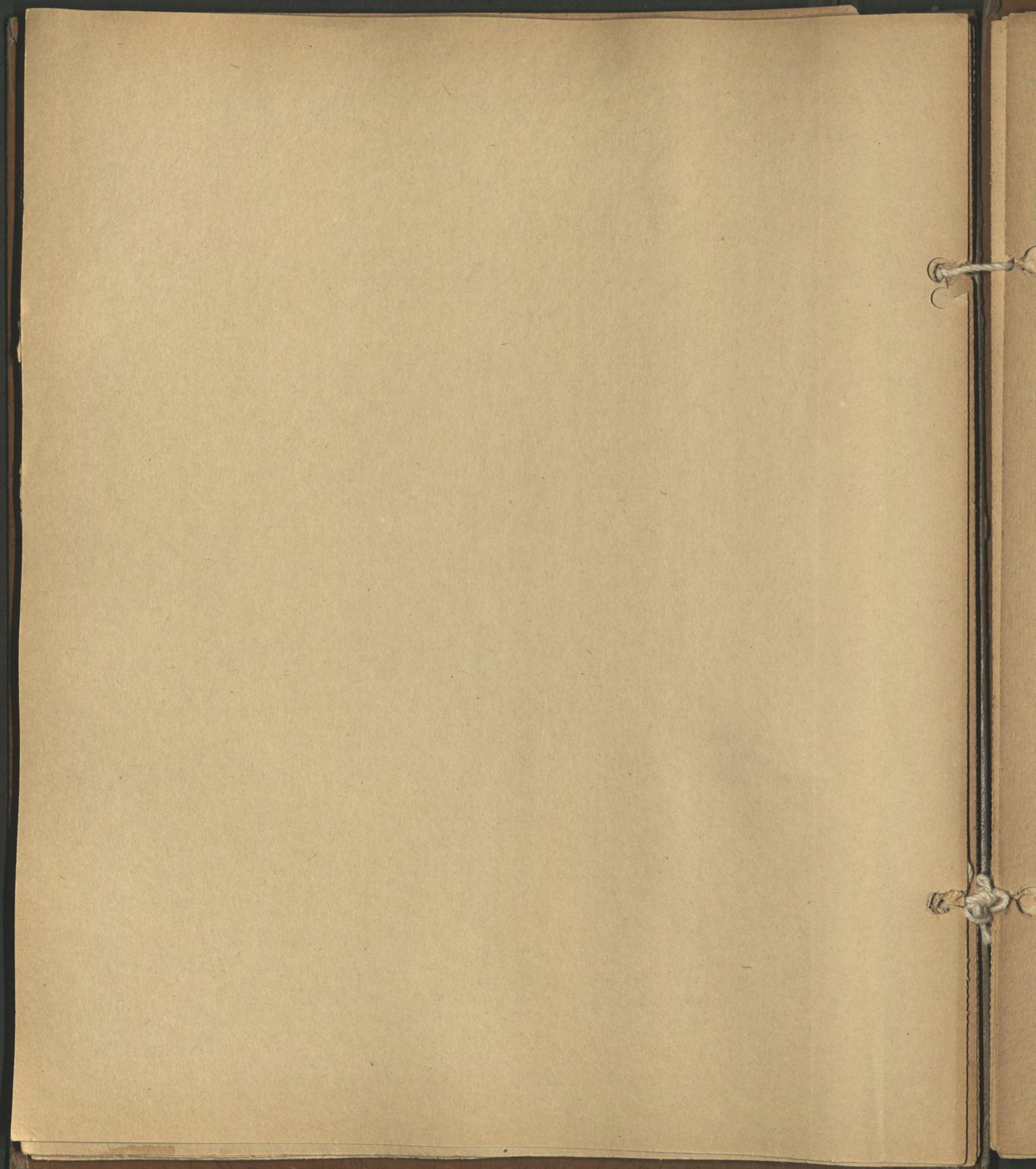
The carving was made by Miss Aletha Macy of Nantucket in 1951, and represents more than 700 hours of painstaking work. It is skillfully done, every feature of the portrait has been reproduced in the most minute detail.

The carving was made exactly 100 years after the portrait was painted.

The portrait was by Mrs. Hermione Dassel, an early artist of note, and was made in the George Fish studio which was located in the Atheneum. No record can be found of the date when the portrait was obtained by the Atheneum.

Abram Quary, the last man with Nantucket Indian blood, resided in the area now known as Abram's Point. It is said when he learned his portrait was to be painted, he insisted he be portrayed barefooted, although he said the artist could paint his shoes if she wished. Accordingly, his shoes are shown side by side under the table.

Sept. 11, 1959



After 100 Years of Existence Atheneum Has 45,000 Volumes

By ALICE HOWARD

It was the morning of January 4, 1847. Tall beaver hat astride his head, thin lips half-smiling, Charles Wood viewed the pillared, yellow painted building. It had been constructed under his expert eye, of "king posts seven by twelve inches" and "Queen posts eight by eight." Pine and other hard timber sturdy enough to withstand 100 years wear went into the building. It was the new Atheneum, planned and completed within the short space of eight months.

William Mitchell, president of the Nantucket Atheneum Incorporated, held a meeting in the Vestry of the Methodist "chapel." Express object of the meeting was "To see what course shall be taken by the Proprietors with reference to the Institution of the future." Committees of citizens, eager to rebuild the library of Nantucket destroyed by fire in 1846, planned and pleaded so well that money, supplies, books and the help of skilled labor were offered with prompt generosity. The new building grew like Jack's beanstalk.

In that year and for the next 54 years, the Nantucket Atheneum was owned and controlled by individuals who bought "a share for not less than five dollars" and, with the donors or proprietors, assumed equal rights in the use of the building and its equipment. Previous to the fire of 1846, shares had cost ten dollars.

Discussion for a free public library did not become widespread until 1892. Then, the idea of permitting books to become the property of everyone was catastrophic. At the meeting of Proprietors, a vote of 45 shares showed only two in favor of a public library.

In 1846, of the 353 towns in Massachusetts, only 25 were without a public library. Nantucket town, more prosperous than many others, held out for eight years against a free circulation of books. But, at last, in 1900, conferences and meetings with the Board of Selectmen, Proprietors and Shareholders resulted in a town appropriation of \$900 and the opening of a free library. Since that time, the use of the library with many extended services has developed swiftly under the guidance of first, Miss Sarah F. Barnard, later, of Miss Clara Parker and her assistant, Mrs. Herbert N. Gibbs.

Ben Franklin, source of many invigorating plans, fathered the notion of libraries for the many. The seed, once planted, mushroomed throughout the populated states.

Seven Nantucketers, among them a Macy, a Coffin, and a Swain, sniffed the winds of change and growth. They formed the Nantucket Mechanic Social Library Association with a total capital of 26 books. That was in 1820.

A rival group set up the Columbian Library Society in 1823. Happily, four years later, they combined their resources to form a new organization called "United Library Association." And Nantucket was on its way to a public library, although the years ahead would be bitter and difficult.

The first brick building was planned to stand on Main street, land for it being given by David Joy and Charles Coffin. The Association raised \$4200 for a building to contain a library, a lecture room and a museum. When the directors of the plan discovered the land inadequate, with Yankee ingenuity they swapped the corner lot of Pearl and Federal owned by the Universalist Church for the Main street site. And that was how Charles Wood came to stand on a wind-swept corner that morning in January, 1847.

The Atheneum maintained its original three-fold purpose until 1925. That year, for lack of space, the seven-foot sperm whale's jaw, the model of "The Camels" out-fitted with a model ship and "a complete cabinet of wonders, both of sea and land" were moved to the Whaling Museum where they have become familiar to Nantucketers and Summer visitors.

The lecture hall, its high windows overlooking town and harbor, today houses stacks of books which no longer circulate. Once the two eight-branched chandeliers glowed with gas-light while the intellectuals of Nantucket listened to Ralph Waldo Emerson round out his Transcendentalism or Horace Greeley thunder his political views. Behind gas footlights, the flame carefully shielded from the actors by a wire netting, plays and other entertainments were given.

Progress intervened. A safety code set up by the Fire Department and improved building laws decreed remodelling of the hall. Unable to meet additional expense, the hall was permanently closed for public use.

Through town appropriation and generous personal gifts, the Nantucket Atheneum continues its fine service. In 1846—it had 3,000 books. Today—it has more than 45,000. Now some parents are advancing the suggestion that there should be a library room for children and young people—separate from the adult reading room—with a librarian to work with them.

The present officers of the Atheneum are Harry M. Harp, president; the Rev. William E. Gardner, vice president; Benson C. Chase, treasurer; Grace B. Gardner, recording secretary; and Mrs. Walton H. Adams, corresponding secretary. There are four trustees: Harry B. Turner, William Brock, Walter Coffin and Miss Clara Parker. A fifth one will be appointed at the annual meeting in 1948.

REOPENING OF THE ATHENEUM—*Olio Entertainment.*—The Atheneum building was reopened to the public Monday evening, a general invitation being extended to our people to examine the improvements which have been made in the library and new reading room, as well as the museum, which was quite generally availed of, the extension—or reading room—being the greatest object of interest. This room, which has been known as the West Room, has been fitted with spacious alcoves and shelves for books, and a large reading table placed in the centre, which patrons of the institution will find a great convenience. A spacious doorway has been cut through the north wall, leading to the library proper. The desk of the librarian has been transferred to the west end of the library room and surrounded by a neat and substantial counter, and both rooms look bright and fresh in a dress of new paint.

In the upper hall an entertainment was given for the benefit of the library, which drew out a large house. This hall has undergone improvements, having been thoroughly cleaned and painted, new ventilators put in the ceiling, and the stage treated to a new, neat carpet. The walls at the rear and side of the stage were adorned with portraits of men who had been closely identified with the Atheneum in various ways, and the entire room bore a refreshing appearance. The evening's programme was full of good things, and opened with an instrumental selection for violin and piano, "Marcia de Figaro," by Mr. John W. Hallett and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Mary E. Starbuck recited beautifully "Ode to the Atheneum," written by Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck. Miss Emma Cook sang with sweet grace "O, Give Me a Home by the Sea," Miss Susie E. Brock playing the accompaniment. An address, "Invisible Portraits," the production of Dr. Arthur E. Jenks, was an excellent paper, embracing tender tributes to several of the parties represented in the portraits upon the walls, and to many of the prominent poets and lecturers who had in former years graced the stage of the institution—such men as Rev. John Pierpont, John G. Saxe, Wendell Phillips, George Sumner, Rev. Henry Giles, Horace Greeley, Park Benjamin, Rev. William R. Alger, Rev. T. Starr King, Thoreau, Prof. Silliman, and Hon. William Mitchell. The treatment of the subject was suggested while reading the preface of an elegant volume in the Atheneum Library, entitled, "Biographical Encyclopedia of Massachusetts of the Nineteenth Century." The book was the thoughtful and liberal bequest of the late Charles G. Coffin, one of the founders of the Atheneum, and many years its honored president. Dr. Jenks was warmly encored at the conclusion of his remarks. A duet, "Gently Sighs the Breeze," was very sweetly rendered by Mr. B. G. Tobey and Miss Emma Cook. Miss Emma Cartwright added greatly to the laurels she has already won, in the recitation of "The Death Bridge of the Tay," which she recited most admirably, holding the audience in breathless silence, and portraying the dark and bright sides of the poem in a vivid manner, which called forth a round of applause as she finished. Mr. John W. Hallett followed with a bass solo, "The Tempest," which was finely rendered. An original poem, by William H. Macy, Esq., which embodied a brief history of the old and new Atheneum buildings, with happy hits, was very happily read by Miss Stella L. Chase. A song "Hide and Seek," by Miss

Emma Cook, was charmingly sung. Allen Coffin, Esq., addressed the audience briefly, naming the portraits, and presenting to the audience the propriety of a liberal support of an institution which has done and will do so much good in this community. A selection for violin and piano, by Mr. Hallett and Miss Cook, completed the evening's entertainment, which was a success in every way, netting a snug little sum for the benefit of the library. We print below, by request, the poem of Mr. Macy:

Our Atheneum.

With loyal hearts responsive to the call,
We meet again within this dear old hall,
And cheerfully our modest efforts lend
To serve the interests of a dear old friend,
To aid our Atheneum, so highly prized,
Braving all risk of being criticised.
With music, speech and song we meet to-night,
And surely it would seem but just and right
To call up, in this rhyming contribution,
The story of so good an institution.

Previous to eighteen hundred thirty-four,
(I cannot say how many years before,
Nor would it matter even if I could,)
Upon this site a house of worship stood.
I well remember its appearance then,
Though but a little urchin less than ten;
And as no sign-board e'er escaped my search,
On this I read, First Universalist Church;
Also a date printed in letters Roman,
This I recall because 'twas so uncommon.
But what is such vague recollection good for,
Since now I can't tell what those letters stood for;
As to the edifice, I must allow,
Its general form was much like this one now;
No lofty tower or spire towards heaven reached,
But here the Reverend George Bradburn preached.
I heard him once, once only, I believe,
Gaining for just once the parental leave.
Our Quaker birthright told us it was wrong
To worship God with music and with song;
But I confess a feeling of delight,
To find that there were those who thought it right.
The world moved on, and soon there came a day
When Universalism didn't pay;
Or else 'twas something else, it doesn't matter,
Whether it was the former or the latter.
If I digress, my story'll ne'er be told,
And so, one day, I heard the church was sold.
The United Library Association,
Doing a good work for our civilization,
Counted some noble men within its ranks,
To whom we owe to-night our grateful thanks.
Coffin and Joy are honored above all,
Their portraits, side by side, adorn the wall,
And grateful memories in our minds suggest,
Though they have passed on to their final rest.
These men with generous sums to head the list,
Found others prompt and willing to assist;
Losing no time, at their great work they went,
Building up for themselves a monument;
Leaving results to us which, when we are gone,
Will stand for generations yet unborn.
Thus a foundation being firmly laid,
A building purchased, certain changes made
To fit it for the purposes designed,
To elevate the human heart and mind,
The ball when started quickly onward rolled,
And thus we heard that the old church was sold.
New books were purchased,
Old ones freely given,
By eager hands the work was pushed and driven.
The precious volumes, starting from a few,
Quickly to hundreds, then to thousands grew,
And readers old and young being thus allured,
The library became a thing assured.
A museum, too, was sure success to win,
For contributions rare came pouring in.
All the queen things in nature and in art,
All climes, all lands and oceans bore their part.
Our men in those days dug wealth from the seas,
O'er the wide world their canvas woos the breeze,
Old sailors from long voyages returned,
Enjoyed the rest they had so bravely earned,
And, as might be supposed, these stout sea-kings
Had brought home many strange and curious
things,
And these, when brought together for inspection,
Made up a rare and valuable collection.
The lecture room formed an important part.
In the grand programme from the very start,
Courses of lectures were inaugurated,
Keeping the public interest unabated.
Home talent for the most part was employed,
Large audiences applauded and enjoyed.
Yet of those old discourses we must say,
How different from the lectures of to-day!
All the world did not travel then as now,
On railroad trains,—because they knew not how;
Progress in later days has pushed aside
The things with which our sires were satisfied.
The simple battery and Voltaic pile,
So strange in those days, now would raise a smile;
Wonderful things with which they were beguiled,
Have now become but playthings for the child;
Lecturers now would look for small returns,
For things which every high-school urchin learns.
He knows that none would go into ecstasies
Over a long discourse on hydrostatics.
Imagine grown folks listening calm and placid,
Learning how vitriol is sulphuric acid;
How it requires six planes to bound a cube,
And what is meant by the pneumatic tube!
With the dimensions of Earth, Mars and Venus,
And what the distance is in miles between us!
Science, compared with what she now can show,
Was but an infant fifty years ago.
None knew of Darwin then nor Herbert Spencer,
But wondrous were the air-pump and condenser.
But yet the picture has another side,
Which makes us think of the old hall with pride.
What moral ideas found expression there!

Sept. 26, 1947
Town Crier

How many young reformers can witness bear
Of the slow growth of right and common sense,
Helped on by good impressions sent out thence?
There friends of education held convention,
Discussing points too numerous to mention;
Discarding old and building up new rules,
Seeking to raise the standard of our schools.
There anti-slavery champions sometimes dared
To raise their protest for which few then cared,
Except to sneer; but later, all admired
The force of strong conviction that inspired
The courage shown by those few pioneers,—
So marvellous the change in twenty years!
And when the Washingtonian reform
Swept o'er the country like a driving storm,
I heard the voice of "old John Hawkins" ring,
Warning us all 'gainst the accursed thing.
That storm passed o'er; 'tis sad to think that men
Need his rude eloquence now, even as then.
"Laughing gas" made us fun in that dear hall;
Now, utilized, it yields no fun at all;
'Twas there we first saw "subjects" mesmerized,
And then concluded we'd been victimized;
There Henry Wright preached universal peace,
With faith that wars and human strife would cease;
And Graham, with his vegetable diet,
Making small gains, and still less converts by it.
But why go on? this sort of retrospective
Carries me always in the same direction.
Queer episodes in youth and boyhood all
Associate themselves with that old hall.

So, by a grateful people prized and nourished,
Through twelve bright years our Atheneum flourished;

Its library had grown to fill the shelves;
Some of the books were fortunes in themselves.
The queer things to the museum attached,
In certain specialties could scarce be matched
By any in the land. Disaster came;
Our Atheneum went up in smoke and flame!
Yet not alone, 'twas on that fatal day,
When hundreds saw their savings swept away
Before the all-devouring fiery blast,
Undoing all the labors of the past.
'Tis idle to attempt to estimate
Our loss in dollars, when relentless fate
Snatches away from us, as in this case,
Things which no money ever can replace;
There are some things that money cannot do;
'Twas those old things we wanted, not the new.

But yet our Atheneum rose once more;
The building handsomer than e'er before
Rose Phoenix-like just where the old one stood,
To wield through all these years a power for good,
More precious far than jewels in our sight.
The very house in which we meet to-night.
A generous gift of books sent from abroad
(The fact should give us pleasure to record),
Served as a nucleus to build upon.
More were soon added, and the fight was won.
'Twas not so easy to begin again
Collecting curious things from o'er the main;
No one could duplicate those things destroyed;
A museum room seemed like an aching void.
Besides, things were not as they used to be;
The times had changed, and so, forsooth, had we.
Our fleet of shipping grew; we must confess,
"Small by degrees, and beautifully less;"
Our dear old business destined was to fail,
Owing to the great scarcity of whale,
And smaller prices for the few we got,
The California mania, and what not,
Until of ships and active men bereft,
No mariners, but old worn-out ones, left.
The museum picked up what it could collect,
And is to-day all that we should expect.
But jolly P. T. Barnum tells his readers
To run a museum you must have feeders.
Our Atheneum felt the stern decline,
Languished, like things in every other line;
Its finances at times ran very low,
It seemed at times to be but touch and go;
No new books added, the few paying shares
Scarcely affording income for repairs.
Rewards come sometimes to the patient waiter,
So now and then some generous testator,
By timely gift, has helped us through the year,
And brought down blessings on his memory dear.
Still holding on through all the ups and downs,
Still striving, whether fortune smiles or frowns,
A three days' fair held thirteen years ago,
Built up our funds, then running very low,
And though by no means richly we're endowed,
Yet now that every summer brings a crowd,
This helps to swell our modest income more,
And whispers of still brighter days in store.

The story of the old hall has been told,
But this one can a longer tale unfold.
For six and thirty years it now has stood,
Wielding its influence for the public good,
Our twenty-seven annual fairs have all
Been seasons of reunion at this hall;
During the years of war, these walls have rung
With patriotic words to stir the young;
And many a brave youth, registering his name,
Went forth to take his chance of death and fame;
And during great political campaigns,
That tried men's souls, and sometimes turned their
brains.
These walls have echoed many a fierce oration,
Big with the fate of freedom and the nation.
Now as to lectures, musicals and shows,
Let younger generations tell of those,
Their recollections cover, like our own,
Persons and things of every shade and tone,—
From highest thoughts to which the soul aspires,
To "that Comical Brown," and Flora Myers;
From Greeley, Robert Collyer and Kate Stanton,
Down to the juggler and the magic lantern.
We've only proud and cheering words to say,
Touching the status of affairs to-day.
Here's our old institution sound and strong,
And likely to endure for e'er so long,
Able to pay off all our liabilities,
And add more to our library facilities.
Our books increased so fast that, to keep pace,
We felt the need of an increase of space;
The library requiring a whole floor,
And now more popular than e'er before,
While summer visitors at small expense,
May gratify the intellectual sense.
We've renovated and improved this hall,
And the condition of the ceiling wall
No longer need disturb us in our beds.

With fear lest it might tummo on our heads;
And all the arrangements will be sure to please
The eye and taste,—except the old settees.
The wonders of the museum collection
Fail not to court each visitor's inspection,
Though to us natives rather an old story,
They tell the stranger of our former glory;
He scans the relics o'er with curious gaze,
And puts strange queries touching those old days;
Wonders what such outlandish things can be,
And why we should use camels on the sea;
Whether the camels killed the whales? And how?
And why our people don't go whaling now?
Thus putting the custodian's brain to rack
To find the straw that broke the camel's back;
Then tells his friends, "that janitor in there
Has got more jaw than can be found elsewhere."
But learns there are some things in heaven and
earth
Quite new to him—and gets his money's worth.

What of the future? 'Tis for us to cherish
Our Atheneum, that it shall not perish,
But stronger grow from year to year and greater,
Regarded as a sort of Alma Mater,
Deserving filial love from each and all,
Three generations hearken to the call.
Feeling the love and reverence that we owe,
Let's teach our children in the faith to grow.
Next to our schools our Atheneum is prized;
Its founders' names are ever canonized
In grateful hearts. We build their mausoleum
In keeping up their work, our Atheneum.

March 3, 1883

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM.

At the Annual Meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum, it was unanimously voted to hold a Fair in the month of August, 1870, to continue three days, for the purpose of raising funds for this, the only permanent literary

institution of our Island.

Our building needs extensive repairs, and the

library is sadly in want of a supply of modern

publications. The thirst for knowledge on the

part of our people is unabated, and we desire par-

ticularly to see every youthful mind in our midst

supplied with the means of growth.

The Fair will be held on the 9th, 10th and 11th of August next. Our friends here are already at work. We mean that it shall surpass anything of the kind ever held here. The evening entertainments will be of a varied character, and will be such as will amuse, interest and instruct. The museum will receive large additions, and will be made a place of great interest. Articles of needle-work in great abundance, objects of *virtu*, utensils of practical importance, and refreshments of rare excellence, will constantly be exposed for sale.

We ask the aid of our friends, wherever they may be. Contributions of money, dry goods, fancy articles, shells, confectionery, stationery, groceries, in fact anything that will sell, will be thankfully received. Many things will be needed at once, as the work of preparation has already commenced. Goods of a perishable nature, will, of course, not be desired until near the time of the Fair; but that our arrangements may be properly made, we solicit now, promises to furnish such articles whenever the committee may call for them. We seek nothing for ourselves, but in view of the great good accomplished in the past, we ask for aid in our efforts to sustain an institution which is calculated to be of immense importance in the development of those intellectual and moral faculties for whose cultivation Nantucket has always been pre-eminent.

Contributions may be forwarded and communica-

tions addressed to either of the Committee.

ALFRED MACY, President.

ALEXANDER MACY, Jr., Secretary.

TIMOTHY CALDER, Treasurer.

Andrew Whitney, Mrs. Sarah M. Hallett,
Frederick C. Sanford, " Joseph B. Macy,
J. B. King, " Timothy W. Calder,
James Wyer, " James Wyer,
E. H. Alley, " Charles H. Starbuck,
Joseph Mitchell, 2d, " E. H. Alley,
William H. Waitt, " Franklin Nickerson,
Joseph Mitchell, " James H. Gibbs,
Charles G. Coffin, " John W. Macy,
Joseph B. Macy, " Samuel B. Swain,
James H. Gibbs, Miss Helen A. Gardner,
John W. Macy, " Mary P. Swain,
Henry D. Robinson, " Sarah F. Barnard,
Mrs. Alfred Macy, " Jane Coffin,
" George Starbuck, " Susan Coffin,
" J. B. King, " Martha F. Coleman,
" William H. Crosby, " Phebe C. Edwards,
" S. D. Hosmer, " Mary E. Coffin,
" Matthew Starbuck, " Annie B. Mitchell.

1870

For the Inquirer and Mirror.

Messrs. Editors:—There was an expression of unalloyed satisfaction and approval throughout the community when your issue of the 9th inst. appeared, and the list of officers of trustees for the Atheneum, including the names of two women, was read. Many persons, not themselves realizing that they were inclined to favor woman's election to places of trust and honor, inadvertently exclaimed, Amen! good for Nantucket! Hitherto men only had the complete control and disposition of the contributions of women trustees. Men only have selected books for the Atheneum; engaged lecturers; and acted in all respects for that institution. "No woman named." It is to be hoped that this action on the part of the trustees of the Atheneum will be a prelude to a more extended recognition of the claims of woman to equal representation in all municipal affairs, and that they will be elected to suitable offices at the approaching town-meeting, to be held in February next.

Women are, of course, as much interested in public concerns as men (especially in the condition of the poor of our Asylum, for whose treatment there are many women in our community peculiarly adapted), and who ought to have a voice in the expenditure of the money they pay for taxes in support of public works. Men make such a disposition thereof as they choose, without consulting those who are thus taxed. A hackneyed excuse for this injustice is, that women are now represented by fathers, husbands, brothers and sons.

No one accustomed to examine principles in the light of logic would make such a false assertion. They are simply placed on a par with children, idiots and felons, or not represented at all; and, in many instances, their money is made to maintain men and measures which they despise. In this way Government derives unjust power, not from the consent, but from the enforced legal disability of the governed. The sophist excuses this injustice by saying that men do not always have their choice of representatives, ignoring the fact that they have a *vote* in the matter. The most important subject which will come up for consideration at the approaching annual town-meeting is the School Department.

It is of the greatest consequence that the School Committee should be selected with the utmost care and judgment. The time has arrived when all classes in our community unite to favor the appointment of women on our school board. This is especially appropriate and desirable in Nantucket, where women constitute so large a majority of the inhabitants, and where there are so many ex-teachers, who have proved their fitness for the position by their complete success in their profession. They understand the needs of the schools from their own experience.

As a large proportion of our schools is of a primary grade, the feminine element on the committee to co-operate with the teacher has always been felt to be a crying need. In reference to a little perplexing difficulty, which arose in the discipline of a Primary school in our town some years ago, S. R. (deceased) remarked emphatically to a gentleman of the School Committee, who chanced to visit the school on the day it occurred, that if there was a woman on the committee, she could explain the matter more freely to her, and with her aid and influence the difficulty could be easily adjusted. This excellent lady, though dead, now speaketh a strong word in favor of securing the quick perception and warm sympathy of woman as a factor in the constitution of the school board. We wish to elevate the tone of instruction in our public schools, and make them compare favorably with the best schools on the continent; and we believe that the introduction of women on the school board will tend to this result.

The vacancies, which will occur by the resignation of those whose term of office will have expired at the close of the present school year, make an opening for the introduction of this new element, and it is to be hoped the voters of Nantucket, without distinction of party, will not neglect the golden opportunity of doing justice to our public schools, that they will secure the names of suitable women in season, that they will rally at the polls to see that their ticket is elected, and not fail for want of promptitude, diligence and zeal.

It is no longer an innovation for women to be placed in responsible public positions. In almost every considerable town, from Boston to San Francisco, the appointment of women on school committees has proved a complete success. In this matter we are no longer bound by the subtle threads of habit and tradition to past usages.

Where could there be a more appropriate place for woman than the honorable councils of education, where the interests of our children are considered, or who could better devise ordinances, calculated to elevate the rising generation,—to make health and study go hand in hand in our public schools, improving the intellect, morals, and manners of the pupils?

May the voters remember their great responsibility in this important matter of electing School Committee and act accordingly. The voice of justice, caught ever by the finer ear of the nation, though low and inarticulate at first, will be sure in the end to attain a volume, sufficiently strong, to be heard and heeded by all. While, as an island, we are materially isolated, let us show, by our conformity to the progressive movements of the age, that we are not cut off from the great rushing current of modern thought and improvement.

A. G.

Settled.

We are gratified to announce that a satisfactory compromise has been effected between the committees of the town and Atheneum, and Mrs. Mary C. Sanford, who appealed from the allowance of the will of her husband, the late F. C. Sanford. The committees have worked together in perfect harmony, and by persistency and assisted by the able efforts of their counsel, Messrs. Hemenway and Coffin, have brought about a result that we feel cannot but be very satisfactory to all parties in interest—both plaintiff and defendants.

It appears to us a just settlement, and we are sure the people will be pleased with the concession made in Mrs. Sanford's interests, while allowing the will to stand. The terms are that the will be proved, and \$10,000 allowed Mrs. Sanford, the expenses of the committees and the fees of counsel on both sides to be paid by the executor of the estate.

Nov. 7, 1891

A GOOD WORK PROGRESSING.—The work of cataloguing the books of the Atheneum Library, under the supervision of Miss Sarah F. Barnard, the librarian, assisted by Misses Helen Swain, Alice Coggeshall, Emma Cartwright, Ida M. Lovell, Mabel Easton and Sarah Frank Ray, was completed yesterday, and will be prepared for printing at an early day. The work involved the rearrangement and classification of the books, and consequent renumbering of many. When the catalogue is printed, members possessing one can select the books they desire, at their leisure at home, and then readily find them upon the shelves if not taken. The convenience of a catalogue will be appreciated when put in use, and members will doubtless marvel that so large an institution has got along with so many books, so many years without one.

March 31, 1883

Atheneum Notice.

THE Curators of the Nantucket Atheneum beg to leave to inform the friends of that Institution, both at home and abroad, that by the great fire of July, 1846, all the valuable Curiosities comprised in the Museum were destroyed.

They now appeal to their fellow citizens and the public at large, for aid in the establishment of a new collection of rare things, such as coins, minerals, shells, Polynesian implements, &c.

They wish to call the particular attention of their Nantucket friends in the Pacific Ocean, to this subject, as many opportunities may be presented to them, in course of their long and widely extended voyages, for the procurement of many articles of peculiar fitness for a Museum.

They would say to all, that any donations will be most gratefully received, and can be left at the Atheneum, or at the store of Wm. H. Geary, Main street.

ISAAC AUSTIN, Chairman.

120

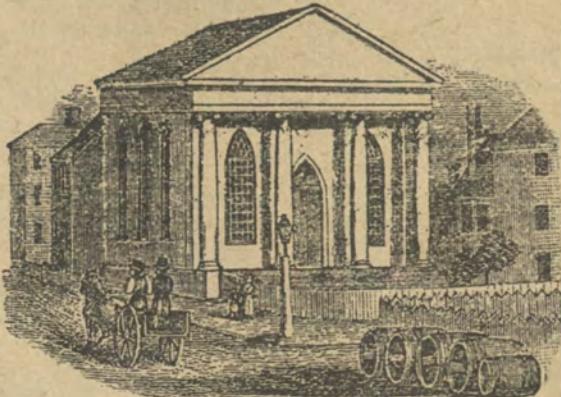
LECTURE.

MRS. FRANCES T. YOUNG, of Boston, as spiritual medium, will lecture in a trance state, (influenced by spirits of a high order) at the Atheneum Hall on Wednesday evening, January 4th. Doors open at 6 1/2 o'clock. Lecture to commence at 7. Admittance 15 Cents.

Dec. 30, 1859

THE CENTENNIAL OF THE ATHENEUM LIBRARY BUILDING.

BY GRACE BROWN GARDNER.



In a letter written by Maria Mitchell nearly one hundred years ago, which is now the property of David Wood of this town, she refers to a "melancholy meeting over the yet red hot ashes of the former Atheneum" with a botanist who was contributing to the collections of the Museum.

Less than seven months later, from those "red hot ashes" of the Great Fire of 1846, had risen the present Atheneum building, which was opened to the public on the first day of February, 1847. With fire damage of a million dollars, one-third of the town in ruins, hundreds of families homeless, and seven-eighths of the mechanics without shops, stock or tools, that was a noteworthy achievement of our forefathers of which their descendants may well be proud.

Early History.

A very interesting history of the Nantucket Atheneum was published in the Inquirer and Mirror of April 14, 1900, on the occasion of the opening of the Atheneum as a Free Library for the town of Nantucket. This history was written by Miss Sarah F. Barnard, who was the Librarian at that time, and it is widely quoted in the present article.

While all records of the Atheneum previous to 1847 were destroyed in the Great Fire, from other sources we learn the story of its origin, which is as follows:

In 1820 seven young men of Nantucket—David Joy, Peleg Mitchell, Daniel P. Macy, John H. Coffin, Gideon Swain, Edward C. Hussey and George Fitch—associated themselves under the name of "Nantucket Mechanics' Social Library Association". They had only twenty-six volumes when they started the library. In 1823 another society was formed and named the "Columbian Library Society". In 1827 the two societies united, and the new society was called the "United Library Association".

In 1833 two of its members, David Joy and Charles G. Coffin, bought the land on Main street where the house of the late Henry Coffin now stands for \$1800 and gave it to the society on condition that the society would raise \$3500 and build a brick building suitable for a library room, lecture room and museum.

The sum of \$4200 was raised, each subscriber of \$10 having an equal right with other donors. The lot of land proved to be too small, and an exchange was made with the proprietors of the Universalist Church on the corner of Federal and Pearl streets. That building was altered to answer the requirements, and in 1834 the society was incorporated as the Nantucket Atheneum.

THE FIRST ATHENEUM (before the Fire of 1846)

As may be seen from the above, there were at first three distinct departments in the Atheneum: the Library proper, the Museum and the Lecture Room.

The Museum was described as follows on an old sign which hung on the outside of the building some fifty years ago:

Atheneum Museum.

The Atheneum Museum is now open to visitors in charge of Mr. H. P. Clapp who will be ready to explain its wonders to strangers, and answer all questions concerning the many curiosities on exhibition.

The Great Sperm Whale's Jaw, seventeen feet long, in perfect condition, with all the teeth in place, is among the attractive features of the Museum. Also, a model of the famous "Camels" with a ship in their embrace, an interesting reminder of the palmy days of the Nantucket Whale-Fishery; and hundreds of strange things and objects of curious interest, forming a complete Cabinet of wonders, both of sea and land, collected from nearly every part of the globe.

Admission 15 cents.

Hours of Exhibition 9 a. m. to 1 p. m., 6:30 p. m. to 8 p. m.
H. P. Clapp, 43 Centre St., Nantucket, Mass.

In 1925 this Museum was discontinued, as more space was needed for the Library. Most of the exhibits were loaned or donated to the Nantucket Historical Association, where they are seen each year by thousands of visitors.

The Lecture Course flourished for many years. At the modest price of one dollar per ticket for the entire winter course of lectures, the Nantucketers of the forties and fifties had the opportunity of hearing such prominent men as Prof. Silliman, John Pierpont, Theodore Parker, Thomas Starr King, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Wendell Phillips, John G. Saxe, Henry D. Thoreau, Horace Greeley and many others.

The Lecture Hall was also used for entertainments, suppers, fairs and other social gatherings, and was a source of revenue to the Atheneum. As years went on, however, and building and fire laws became more stringent, extensive alterations would have been necessary to comply with the regulations, and the hall was closed to public gatherings. At present it is used exclusively for the storage of books, and contains large numbers of the less frequently circulated volumes.

Shareholders and Proprietors.

When the two original library societies combined in 1827 each subscriber of ten dollars had an equal right with all other donors. After the Great Fire fifty additional shares were created at a price of "not less than five dollars a share". In the By-Laws published in 1895 the number of shareholders was limited to 275. There was a small annual assessment on each share to provide for the upkeep of the Library. Only shareholders, and annual subscribers admitted under such conditions as the Trustees might direct, had the privilege of taking books from the Library.

After the Atheneum became a Public Library, there were no further assessments, nor were there any further privileges in regard to the circulation of books granted to the shareholders, and many shares became inactive. Owing to the neglect of heirs of deceased persons to give proper notice of transfers of shares, or even to make such transfers, the records have become incomplete.

In the near future there will appear in the columns of the Inquirer and Mirror a list of shareholders as of 1915. Any of those shares not already transferred may be transferred on the books of the society, the old certificate first being given up or shown to be lost. A new certificate will then be issued by the Secretary, under the seal of the corporation.

On the west wall of the Library hangs the first certificate issued by the Atheneum when it was incorporated in 1834. It was issued by David Joy to his brother, Moses Joy, Jr., and was presented to the Library by another David Joy, the third in line by that name, in 1928.

Recovery From The Great Fire.

The earliest records now existing begin with a meeting held in the Vestry of the Methodist "Chapel" on Monday, 8th month 1846. The President, William Mitchell, stated that the object of the meeting was to see "what course shall be taken by the Proprietors with reference to the Institution for the future, the Atheneum Building with its entire contents including the Library and Cabinet of Curiosities having been destroyed by the terrible conflagration which occurred on the 13th and 14th ultimo."

This, and the records following, are painstakingly written in the Spencerian penmanship of that period, which resembles copperplate. They are very explicit. Various committees were formed to solicit contributions of money, of books, and of articles for the Museum. Other committees were to attend to various phases of the contemplated building program. Later page after page of the records lists



THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM LIBRARY

the sums of money contributed, and the separate volumes and the sets of volumes donated by individuals, by publishers, by libraries, by organizations and by scientific societies. There is no question but that the response to the appeals was both prompt and generous.

The report of the Building Committee, Jan. 4, 1847, includes the builders' specifications for the rebuilding, with dimensions of lumber used, as "King posts 7 by 12 inches" and "Queen posts 8 by 8 inches", and the whole frame being of "pine and heavy timber and of sufficient strength in the opinion of your committee to make a strong and safe building". The test of one hundred years has proved the correctness of their opinion.

Agitation for a Free Public Library.

As the years passed, instead of feeling pride in its excellent Atheneum Library, Nantucket began to be sensitive in regard to being one of the few towns in the Commonwealth with no Free Public Library. There was much agitation in regard to making the Atheneum free. The matter was brought before the Proprietors in 1892. Of forty-five shares represented only two were in favor. Debate waxed strong and bitter feeling developed.

A letter from Allen Coffin, Esq., published in the Inquirer and Mirror in 1895 quotes an appeal from the chairman of the Free Public Library Commission urging the establishment of such a Library. At that time, of 353 towns in the Commonwealth only 25 were without Free Public Libraries. Of these 25 towns Nantucket was far in the lead both in population and in wealth.

Public demand grew slowly but steadily. Not until 1900 was the controversy settled. Then, after repeated meetings and many conferences with the Selectmen, by the assistance of an appropriation of \$900 made by the Town of Nantucket, the Nantucket Atheneum Library was made a Free but not a Public Library, and opened as such in April of that year.

Gifts and Bequests.

The Atheneum has been most fortunate in the wide-spread interest shown in its welfare, as testified by numerous gifts, donations and bequests. Among these there is space for mentioning only a few which are among the most outstanding.

To replace the original folio edition of Audubon's "Birds of America", to which the Atheneum had been a subscriber and which was destroyed in the Great Fire, Mrs. David Joy presented the Library with a set in the octavo edition. The books are handsomely bound in Russia leather and protected in a suitable cabinet, which was also the gift of Mrs. Joy.

Frederick C. Sanford not only bequeathed \$20,000 to the society's endowment fund, but gave a thousand books from his personal Library. Many of these books are rare editions with expensive bindings, and together with his donation of over fifty valuable pictures and his collection of old documents are among the treasures of the Atheneum.

The will of William H. Swift provided a substantial sum, of which the interest is used for the purchase of new books. Probably many users of the Library have noticed the stamp "Purchased from the William H. Swift Fund" on the title pages of books.

Approximately 2600 volumes consisting mainly of biography, history, books on the Navy and on diplomatic relations with various foreign countries came from the Library of Rear Admiral William Mayhew Folger. The Atheneum shares with the Whaling Museum, which received many pictures, documents and mementoes, in the generous Nantucket legacies of Admiral Folger.

Among other donations by Edward F. Sanderson is "Hakluyt's Voyages" in over two hundred volumes. These are records of the discoveries of the earliest explorers in all parts of the world. Few Libraries in the country possess a complete set of this extremely valuable work.

The Atheneum was one of the several Nantucket institutions to share in large legacies from the estate of Sidney Mitchell.

Each autumn as our summer visitors leave us, many make gifts to the Library of books which they have enjoyed during their vacation here. These books are recent fiction, biography, travel and other volumes of timely interest, and are much appreciated.

Merely to enumerate the gifts, donations and bequests that the Atheneum has received during the last hundred years would require a separate article.

Present Status.

From its earliest days the Library has had a steady and healthy growth. At the time of the Great Fire it contained 3,000 volumes; in 1883 there were 7,000; by 1900, when it was made a Free Library, the number had increased to 20,000. The report of last year lists 45,904 volumes. There

has been a corresponding increase in the number of borrowers and in books circulated.

The Library Building, however, has remained practically unchanged all through the one hundred years since its erection. More and more space has been utilized for shelves, until in her 1946 report the Librarian reports every nook and cranny crowded, with no space remaining for future acquisitions.

At present the greatest need of the library, aside from shelf space, is a separate room for children and young people, with a special Librarian to aid them with reference work connected with their school home work, and also to foster in them the love of good reading so that it may become a source of pleasure throughout their lives. The crowding together of children and adults in inadequate space, as at present, occasions many problems which a separate room would obviate.

Another need is for a quiet room where adults may work on genealogical, historical or other problems which sometimes require many documents, pamphlets and volumes of reference. At present a card table in some corner offers the only opportunity for such work. Every year the number of such workers increases.

Nantucket has good reason for pride on the occasion of the One Hundredth Anniversary of our Atheneum Building, and for gratitude toward all who have aided in making the Library the outstanding institution that it is at present. And among all to whom gratitude is due, none are more worthy of it than its three Librarians whose terms of service span one hundred and twelve years—Miss Maria Mitchell, Miss Sarah F. Barnard and Miss Clara Parker.

—Grace Brown Gardner,
Sec'y, Nantucket Atheneum.

April 13, 1947

Mineral Collection.

A mineral collection of popular and scientific interest, and having a cash value of several thousand dollars, was formally presented the Nantucket Atheneum, through its trustees, Monday evening. The gift is from Hon. William Mitchell Bunker, of San Francisco, who personally collected the specimens, and who thinks, should his example be followed by other sons and daughters of the island, that the institution should have a collection of practical as well as scientific and popular value that might be utilized by the advanced scholars of the town. These specimens, which comprise six cases, were shipped from San Francisco about the middle of last month on ship William H. Smith, for New York, and should arrive there some time in July. A full catalogue of the specimens accompanied Mr. Bunker's letter of presentation.

Apr. 15, 1899

This institution contains a library of several thousand volumes, and a cabinet, not extensive, but valuable and interesting, collected from every part of the world and from almost every department of nature and art. The curator of the cabinet, Mr. Joseph Swain, is a gentleman excellently qualified for his place; courteous in his attentions, patient of the most curious questions, he imparts his valuable information as if it were a constant delight rather than a duty. Mr. Swain was for many years engaged in the whaling business, and if you are interested to learn the habits of the whale or the mode of capturing him, you may hear them from one who knows by experience. Among many other things which we learned here, was the fact that the whale does not spout water; we had always been taught so, we had read it repeatedly in books; but Mr. Swain assured us that he had the most certain evidence of the truth of his assertion. Once when in a whale boat the animal came up so close to them that the spout was blown upon his face; his face was wet with spray from the spout, but there was not a trace of saltiness in it. We found his statement corroborated by others; and since that time we have met with the following to the same effect;

"When he the surface of the sea hath broke,
Arising from the dark abyss below,
His breath appears a lofty stream of smoke,
The circling waves like glittering banks of
snow."
[By one who had wielded the harpoon and the
lance.]

The relics, that illustrate the great pursuit in which the people were formerly engaged, are especially attractive. One of these gives us an impressive idea of the intrepid spirit which must have characterized a people whose sons were all trained to pursue and encounter the leviathans of the deep. It is the lower jaw of a sperm whale; it is in perfect preservation, 17 feet long, and weighs 800 pounds; it has 46 teeth; each tooth is about 3 inches long and about 2 inches in diameter at the base; the teeth are situated along the jaw at intervals of about 6 inches. The animal has 2 teeth in the upper jaw, he swallows his food whole, and is capable of swallowing fishes as large as a half barrel. The lower jaw appears to be used chiefly as a weapon of defence. The whale from which this jaw was taken was 87 feet long, 36 feet in circumference, and weighed about 100 tons. He yielded 110 barrels of oil.

But perhaps the most interesting object in the museum is the model of the old whalers. Nantucket, like Newburyport, has always suffered from the obstruction of a sand bar that stretches across the entrance to her harbor. When her vessels returned heavily laden with oil they were obliged to anchor out in the bay and remain there until the lighters had removed the larger part of their cargoes; then they hoisted sail and came over the bar; but this was expensive and annoying, and after a time Edgartown became their unloading port. At length the ingenuity of one of the islanders devised a means of lifting the vessels with their cargoes and floating them across the bar; this was accomplished by means of the camels. The general appearance of the camels is that of a huge dry dock; they were 125 feet long and about 40 feet high. They consisted of two large boxes, joined together at the base and fastened at the top by means of chains. Whenever a vessel was to be brought in, the camels were taken out of the harbor and placed in the rear of the vessel. The chains on the top of the camels were loosened and the sides fell apart thereby, giving a large space for the admission of the ship. The next step in the process was to open the port holes in the sides of the camels;

as soon as these were opened the water rushed into the boxes and the camels began to sink. When they were sufficiently low the ports were closed; the vessel backed into its place between the sides, the chains were drawn up and all things made firm and fast. All hands now turned to the pumps, and as the water was thrown out from the boxes the camels began to rise, and with them the vessel, with her cargo of a thousand barrels of oil. Up, up rise the camels, until the vessel with her enormous weight is lifted high above the water, resting like a toy in the arms of the awkward monster. As soon as the water has been expelled the camels are floated over the bar, the ports are again opened, the camels settle down, the chains are unloosed and the vessel moves out on the safe waters of the harbor. There is an impression that the camels were a failure; but this, we are informed on the best authority, was not the case. They were first used in the year 1842, and ceased their service only when whaling had declined, and their service was no longer required.

T.

Nov. 2, 1878

NEW ATHENEUM SEATS.—The long looked for new seats for the Atheneum Hall have arrived, and are being placed in the hall, numbered, and arranged for occupancy. They present a very neat and attractive appearance of themselves; and, when properly arranged to the new design, will make the hall look modern and beautiful. A centre aisle with two side aisles next the walls are to be maintained, which will make ingress and egress easier than heretofore. Each seat will be numbered in consecutive order from No. 1 up to the highest number, so there need be no confusion about the same numbers in different rows, or the same numbers in the Right and Left. George H. Grant & Swain, of Richmond, Ind., were the manufacturers. Mr. Albertus Swain, formerly of Nantucket, being a member of the firm, has given special attention to the work and secured a creditable job.

The management of the Atheneum expect to announce a lecture at an early day, by Mr. Prentiss Mulford, for the benefit of the new seat fund.

The decease of Mr. Joseph S. Swain, which occurred yesterday morning, will be regretted not only by his family and fellow-townsmen, but by hundreds of the former visitors who have been entertained and instructed by him when visiting the museum in the Atheneum building. Mr. Swain had been janitor of that institution for many years past, and having followed the sea in his early life, was well qualified to explain to strangers the many curious things exhibited by him at the museum, interesting them by his fund of quaint anecdotes, and his happy manner of telling them. He has retained his usual health and vigor until within a brief period prior to his death, and his departure seems to all a sudden and unexpected one. He was 78 years of age, has been twice married, and leaves a widow and several children.

July 1, 1882

Messrs. EDITORS.—There was an expression of unalloyed satisfaction and approval throughout the community when your issue of the 9th inst. appeared, and the list of officers of trustees for the Atheneum, including the names of two women, was read. Many persons, not themselves realizing that they were inclined to favor woman's election to places of trust and honor, inadvertently exclaimed, Amen! good for Nantucket! Hitherto men only have had the complete control and disposition of the contributions of women trustees. Men only have selected books for the Atheneum; engaged lecturers; and acted in all respects for that institution. "No woman named." It is to be hoped that this action on the part of the trustees of the Atheneum will be a prelude to a more extended recognition of the claims of woman to equal representation in all municipal affairs, and that they will be elected to suitable offices at the approaching town-meeting, to be held in February next.

Women are, of course, as much interested in public concerns as men (especially in the condition of the poor of our Asylum, for whose treatment there are many women in our community peculiarly adapted), and who ought to have a voice in the expenditure of the money they pay for taxes in support of public works. Men make such a disposition thereof as they choose, without consulting those who are thus taxed. A hackneyed excuse for this injustice is, that women are now represented by fathers, husbands, brothers and sons.

No one accustomed to examine principles in the light of logic would make such a false assertion. They are simply placed on a par with children, idiots and felons, or not represented at all; and, in many instances, their money is made to maintain men and measures which they despise. In this way Government derives unjust power, not from the consent, but from the enforced legal disability of the governed. The sophist excuses this injustice by saying that *men* do not always have their choice of representatives, ignoring the fact that they have a *vote* in the matter. The most important subject which will come up for consideration at the approaching annual town-meeting is the School Department.

It is of the greatest consequence that the School Committee should be selected with the utmost care and judgment. The time has arrived when all classes in our community unite to favor the appointment of women on our school board. This is especially appropriate and desirable in Nantucket, where women constitute so large a majority of the inhabitants, and where there are so many ex-teachers, who have proved their fitness for the position by their complete success in their profession. They understand the needs of the schools from their own experience.

As a large proportion of our schools is of a primary grade, the feminine element on the committee to co-operate with the teacher has always been felt to be a crying need. In reference to a little perplexing difficulty, which arose in the discipline of a Primary school in our town some years ago, S. R. (deceased) remarked emphatically to a gentleman of the School Committee, who chanced to visit the school on the day it occurred, that if there was a woman on the committee, she could explain the matter more freely to her, and with her aid and influence the difficulty could be easily adjusted. This excellent lady, though dead, now speaketh a strong word in favor of securing the quick perception and warm sympathy of woman as a factor in the constitution of the school board. We wish to elevate the tone of instruction in our public schools, and make them compare favorably with the best schools on the continent; and we believe that the introduction of women on the school board will tend to this result.

The vacancies, which will occur by the resignation of those whose term of office will have expired at the close of the present school year, make an opening for the introduction of this new element, and it is to be hoped the voters of Nantucket, without distinction of party, will not neglect the golden opportunity of doing justice to our public schools, that they will secure the names of suitable women in season, that they will rally at the polls to see that their ticket is elected, and not fail for want of promptitude, diligence and zeal.

It is no longer an innovation for women to be placed in responsible public positions. In almost every considerable town, from Boston to San Francisco, the appointment of women on school committees has proved complete success. In this matter we are no longer bound by the subtle threads of habit and tradition to past usages.

Where could there be a more appropriate place for woman than the honorable councils of education, where the interests of our children are considered, or who could better devise ordinances, calculated to elevate the rising generation,—to make health and study go hand in hand in our public schools, improving the intellect, morals, and manners of the pupils?

May the voters remember their great responsibility in this important matter of electing School Committee and act accordingly. The voice of justice, caught ever by the finer ear of the nation, though low and inarticulate at first, will be sure in the end to attain a volume, sufficiently strong, to be heard and heeded by all. While, as an island, we are materially isolated, let us show, by our conformity to the progressive movements of the age, that we are not cut off from the great rushing current of modern thought and improvement.

A. G.

Jan. 3, 1875

The party who seeks to set aside a will has the burden of proof in respect to the allegations he files. He must show: 1.—That it was not executed in accordance with the requirements of the statute; or 2.—That the testator was not of sound mind and memory at the time of the execution of the instrument; or 3.—That its execution was procured by fraud or undue influence practiced upon the testator, by reason of which, the instrument expressed not the will of the testator, but the will of the party who influenced its preparation and execution. Even though a will may have been duly executed by a testator possessing mental competency, and without fraud or undue influence, there may be ambiguities in its provisions by which the intentions of the testator may not be readily gathered. In such case a court of competent jurisdiction must be called upon to construe the intent and determine what the testator's intentions were.

ON THE EXECUTION.

In this case the instrument in controversy has a full attestation clause, signed by the subscribing witnesses, in which is recited in substance that Mr. Sanford signed the instrument in their presence; that he declared it to be his will; requested them to sign it as witnesses; and that they did so in his presence. Were the subscribing witnesses now dead, the recitals in the attestation clause signed by them would be accepted as proofs of the due execution of the instrument. But the paper in question was executed by Mr. Sanford when, though he was far advanced in years, he was possessed of mental vigor, and at a period when he was in good health. Hence the testimony of the subscribing witnesses in respect to the execution of the paper must stand, unless it shall be shown by the contestants that they either did not recollect the facts or were guilty of perjury. This was not suggested when the matter was heard in the first instance before the judge of probate. As I understand it, it can be shown that the paper was prepared by a professional man having had large experience in probate matters, and who as a probate judge had become familiar with the requirements of the statute in respect to the execution of testamentary instruments. The presumption by the fact of due execution, that the paper represents the testator's wishes as expressed to the scrivener, is by this fact further increased. I do not see how any question can be raised in respect to the matter of execution.

UNDUE INFLUENCE.

On this point it is clear to my mind that the contestants must fail to sustain their allegation. By the instrument, adequate provision is made for the testator's wife and daughter—the only persons who could take the estate had Mr. Sanford died without a will. Undue influence, under the law, is such a domination of one will over another which amounts to moral coercion, and as a result the weaker does what he otherwise would not have done, and his act is in fact the act of the more powerful mind. But undue influence can rarely be directly proven. From motives which can be readily understood, those who exert it do not do it in public, but in secret. Artifice, blandishments, cajolery and fraudulent misrepresentation are the means used to accomplish the purpose, and in the case of wills it is generally exercised upon a mind naturally weak, or which has become weakened by age, disease or excesses, by persons possessing a strength of purpose sufficient to substitute their mind for the mind of the testator.

But all influence is not undue. Argument, persuasion, appeal to affection or sympathy, and even flattery may be used; and if as the result one secures to himself or to others in whose behalf he is acting a substantial benefaction as against the interests of the wife or children of a testator, it is nevertheless not an influence which the law regards as undue, if it was the free and voluntary act of a capable testator, however he might not have made the disposition without such a rightful influence had been brought to bear upon him. But when undue influence has been exerted, there is always a party who brought it to bear. In the case of Mr. Sanford, to whom has any portion of his estate been diverted from his wife and daughter by

the provisions of the will? Not to anybody while either of them lives, and on the death of the daughter the property from which she derives income as a life tenant goes to the daughter's husband. It is not until both the wife and daughter are dead that the residuary legatees take their bequests. They are the Town, the Unitarian Society and the Atheneum. All are impersonal and are persons only in law. Neither of these residuary legatees, can it be claimed, exerted undue influence. The town did not walk over in a body to Mr. Sanford's house nor charter a steamer and go to New Bedford where the paper was executed, and by the imposing presence of its 3000 and odd inhabitants, intimidate Mr. Sanford into making a bequest for its benefit. Nor is it to be supposed that the trustees of the Atheneum attempted to bully him into providing for a testamentary benefaction.

As for the Unitarian Society, I do not believe that the reverend Mr. Roys held up before Mr. Sanford the terrors of Hades, as was often done during the middle ages, as a means of compelling him to make a gift to the church; for Mr. Roys, years and years ago, abolished hell and all its concomitants. Hence the idea that either of the residuary legatees unduly influenced Mr. Sanford must be dismissed. The son-in-law, Mr. Scott, has a benefaction contingent upon his surviving his wife, the testator's daughter. I don't believe that even he unduly influenced Mr. Sanford in making that provision which enures to his benefit, and I don't believe either that he knew that the provision had been made. Further, I don't believe that Mr. Sanford could be unduly influenced. He was not built that way.

MENTAL COMPETENCY.

This is the only matter left to be considered. The scheme of the will I have already stated. His widow is far advanced in years, and in the course of nature (everywhere except on Nantucket) she could expect to live but a few years. By the will she is provided with an excellent home—the one which she long occupied with her husband—and with an income sufficient to give her all the comforts and luxuries she had during his life. The daughter has reached an age when it is not probable that she will ever bear children, and she is a person of unsound mind. Under the law her husband is bound to provide for her; but Mr. Sanford, in his will, provided a fund in trust for her support and maintenance, the principal at her death to go to her husband if he shall survive her. Under these circumstances the provisions for the wife and daughter are all that either could reasonably expect from conjugal or parental affection. Whatever of substance he had acquired, was through his own efforts. It is not claimed that either wife or daughter had aided him in his accumulations. He could have given

his entire personal estate at once to the Town, the Church and the Atheneum. His entire real estate he could have given to the same legal persons, except that he could not divest his wife of a life estate in one-third of the realty. For the law holds that a man, if of sound mind and acting of his own free will, may do as he pleases with his own.

During Mr. Sanford's life was it ever suggested that he lacked capacity to do business? His early life had been one of activity and success, which culminated in still greater success in his later years, made manifest by the relatively large estate which he disposed of by the paper under consideration. Had he not attended to his affairs with good judgment? Would anybody during his life have dared to intimate that he had not the mental capacity to make a contract, however complicated its provisions might be? Yet the law holds that a man may make a valid will who had not the capacity to make a complex agreement.

If a man has sufficient mind without prompting to gather to it the nature and in a general way the items of his estate and the persons who have a claim upon his testamentary bounty, he is competent to make a will. This is substantially the language of Lord Brougham in a celebrated English case, and it was incorporated almost word for word in the leading case of Parish vs. Parish, reported 25 New York reports, and such is the law in respect to testamentary capacity to-day. I have seen wills simple in their provisions admitted to probate after a contest, which were executed within ten minutes of death, because the probate judge was satisfied that it expressed the wishes of the testator at the time, and that his mind accompanied the act of execution.

Within the past nineteen years I have heard, either as stenographer or as assistant to the Surrogate of New York, nearly two thousand cases of contested wills. In not more than one in a dozen has the contestant succeeded, and not more than one in a hundred of wills offered for probate are broken. In three cases out of four the motive for beginning a contest is to so delay the admission of a will that those interested under its provisions will in the way of compromise give to dissatisfied heirs either more than they would get by the instrument, or give them something if they are disinherited. A prompt trial lessens the chances of success, and in nine cases out of ten contestants find that they have sown the seed of disappointment. As I have already stated at the beginning of this communication, the burden of proof is on those who allege the mental incapacity of Mr. Sanford. Whatever facts may be presented to the jury in support of such a claim can be overcome by the testimony of scores of men with whom he had dealings, and the acts which they can prove will show the most ample capacity to deal with complicated affairs down to the time of his death; and if inquiry be made among those with whom he was on terms of the closest intimacy, I have no doubt that declarations by him can be proven of a purpose to provide benefactions for the town of his birth, in which he had such a just pride, the religious society with which he had been so long connected, and the literary institution, the progress of which he had watched with such enduring interest. Men do not live active and prosperous lives for eighty years to have it first discovered after death that they did not know how to dispose of their estate.

I have dictated this communication at New Bedford, that it might leave by this afternoon's boat, without reference to books, but from my knowledge of the elementary law of wills. The latest work and which contains the most compact statement of the law applicable to such cases is Schouler on wills, and in which the decisions of the courts of Great Britain and America are collated.

EDWARD UNDERHILL.
NEW BEDFORD, April 14, 1891.

APR. 18, 1891

For the Mirror.

Among the books added to the library of our Atheneum the past year, is Bradford's History of Plymouth, being the last publication of the Mass. Historical Society, and the first printed from the Appleton Fund. This book is a copy from Gov. William Bradford's Manuscript, which had never before been printed, but several of the early historians of the colony had been indebted to it for some of the facts contained in their Memorials. Gov. Bradford came over in the Mayflower in 1620, and in the spring of 1621, upon the death of Gov. Carver, succeeded him in the office of Governor, and was annually re-elected to that office for many years, and was a wise and good man, and a prudent and successful Chief Magistrate. His history, besides being worthy of our implicit belief and confidence, is very interesting; and portrays the struggles of an infant colony, under great trials and hardships, which were eminently calculated to train them to virtue and heroism, and fit them to be the founders of a great and noble nation. This work elucidates some parts of the history of that Colony, previously not well understood, and proves some traditions, confidently believed till its publication, to be erroneous.

Thacher's History of Plymouth, and other authorities, state it was a general belief and tradition at Plymouth, that John Howland, who was of Gov. Carver's family, married Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Gov. Carver; but Gov. Bradford, in an account of the persons who came over in the Mayflower, states that John Howland married Elizabeth Tillie, the daughter of John Tillie, and that they had ten children then living. This account of the passengers in the Mayflower was written thirty years after they came over. John Howland and Elizabeth Tillie had both come over in the same ship with Gov. Bradford, and John Howland had been one of Gov. Bradford's assistants in the government, and therefore the Governor would not be likely to be mistaken in his statements. The history under notice may not give such picturesque views of the storms and trials of those early times of New England History, as a lecturer lately exhibited them with, but its historic truthfulness entitles the work to more attention than it has yet received from our community. Soon will the members of the Atheneum have an opportunity to read John Easton's "History of King Philip's war," and other ancient documents relating to the early history of New England and New York, now shortly to be published by the Albany Institute, from original records in the State Archives at Albany. This Institute has been in existence sixty years, and is now going to bring to the light valuable records which have hitherto been inaccessible to the public.

W. C. F.

Jan. 10, 1888

A CARD.

At a Meeting of the Trustees of the Atheneum on Monday evening, the 10th inst., James M. Bunker, Esq. offered the following Resolution, which was unanimously adopted:—

Resolved—That the Trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum highly appreciate the valuable and generous services of those ladies and gentlemen of this town, who have recently planned and successfully carried through "The Entertainments," which have largely contributed both to the credit and the funds of the Institution: and the Trustees deem this, their first Quarterly Meeting, the most fitting, as it is the earliest opportunity presented to express their consideration of those services.

j14 WM. H. WAITT, Secy.

GIFT TO THE ATHENEUM.

The following correspondence will be self-explanatory:

NANTUCKET, MASS., Sept. 1st, 1888.

To the Trustees of the Atheneum:

Herewith enclosed please find one hundred and forty-two dollars (\$142) the proceeds of the entertainment given August 29th, 1888, the same to be applied to the purchase of new books. It is our hope that this sum may be added to in the future by similar entertainments.

Yours respectfully,

VIRGINIA G. SHARP, Entertainment
LUCY CARY MORSE, Committee
WM. H. LIPPINCOT,

To the Entertainment Committee:

A meeting of the Trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum was held September 4th, at which your letter, containing a gift of one hundred and forty-two dollars, was read; and we as a committee are requested to express to you the kindly feeling of the Trustees, and their hearty thanks for the generous gift, which is the result of your earnest and successful efforts. We are also instructed to enclose to you a copy of the following vote:

Voted—That the letter be received and placed among the archives of the Atheneum, and a vote of thanks returned to the donors for the very liberal donation.

And that the committee be informed that the books purchased by this fund will be designated in an appropriate manner.

T. C. DEFRIEZ, Committee
ELIZABETH G. M. BARNEY,

Sept. 12, 1888

Atheneum Library
Elects Officers

Fourteen proprietors attended the annual meeting of the Nantucket Atheneum Library last night. Reports of officers and the librarian, Miss Clara Parker, were heard and officers elected.

Officers named were: Lewis B. Jelleme, president; Henry B. Coleman, vice-president; Miss Grace Brown Gardner, recording secretary; Mrs. Walton H. Adams, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Victor Brown, treasurer; and Paul M. Frye, Miss Parker, Peter M. Hussey, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, the Rev. Bradford Johnson and William C. Brock, trustees.

Tentative plans for improving the facilities of the Atheneum were announced by Mr. Jelleme.

A total of 23,551 books was circulated by the library during the past year, 18,764 to residents and 9,787 to non-residents, Miss Parker stated in her report. An average of 1962 books were circulated each month and 453 a week. Some 534 new books were obtained this year at the library, 534 books were donated, 94 were rebound and 6,938 volumes were discarded. A total of 42,315 books are in the library. During the year 1,297 membership cards were issued, 78 to residents and 1,224 to nonresidents. Fifty-five magazines and newspapers were available at the library and 11 magazines and newspapers were donated for library use. Some 1,353 cards were typed for catalogue.

The work of discarding books from the library was continued this year, Miss Parker said, and Miss Alice Cahill and Miss Rachel M. Santoliquido of the Bureau of Library Extension, Department of Education, twice visited here for four days each time, to do the work, at no cost to the library. A

total of 9,444 volumes has been discarded in the last two years. Replacement of some of the discarded volumes which were shabby and in fine print have been made by more attractive editions, Miss Parker noted in her report, and others will be purchased as soon as possible.

Miss Parker also advised the proprietors that some 20,808 cards or more in the library's filing system have yet to be removed and expressed the hope that the book discarding project be postponed until the work is completed in the catalogues. She explained that for each book discarded in the library there are three or four cards in the catalogue file in reference to it. Until cards are discarded she stated, it cannot be known whether the library still has the books listed in the catalogue or not. She noted:

"Very recently the library has received a sum of money from Miss Elma Loines which she wishes to have used in the purchase of books dealing with the subject of American trade with China in the olden days and such books as Mr. (Edouard) Stackpole's 'Sea Hunters' and several by Foster Rea Dulles on the China trade and others that pertain to these subjects. These are to be purchased very soon. The library already has four copies of 'The Sea Hunters'.

"A great many children's books have been given to the juvenile collection this year and are very attractive. Quite a number more have been bought by the library.

"This year each borrower has been allowed to take four books at a time instead of two as in former years. A great many have availed themselves of this privilege, especially children who spend the summer at Siasconset. They greatly appreciate this favor, as now they are able to take eight or ten books at a time using their own library card and that of some other member of their family."

Proprietors of Atheneum
Elect Officers.

The Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum held their annual meeting in the Library at 7:30 Thursday evening. Following the annual reports of the officers, the election of officers for 1956 was held.

Mr. Lewis B. Jelleme and Mr. Henry B. Coleman were re-elected president and vice-president respectively. Miss Marjorie Barrett was elected recording secretary, succeeding Miss Grace Brown Gardner. Miss Gardner, in turn, was elected corresponding secretary, replacing Mrs. Walton H. Adams, who had previously held the position. Mrs. Victor R. Brown was re-elected treasurer. Trustees elected were: Paul M. Frye, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Rev. Bradford Johnson, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Mrs. George MacDonald, Leroy H. True, and Charles Gerald Snow.

Miss Clara Parker, retiring librarian, was ill and unable to be present. She will be presented an envelope from the Trustees containing a token of appreciation for her long and devoted service to the Atheneum and to the Town. Upon vote of the Proprietors, Miss Parker was appointed Librarian Emeritus.

Mrs. Warner G. White was appointed Acting Librarian. Mrs. White, who, with her husband, has only recently made Nantucket her year-round home, served as Acting Librarian during the October vacation periods. She is well qualified for the position as she is an experienced librarian and formerly was in charge of branch libraries in Buffalo, N. Y.

Miss Janice Williams was appointed Assistant Librarian.

Mr. True made a report for the Preservation and Improvement Committee, stating the work of remodeling the second floor is well under way and it is hoped the room will be ready for use early next summer. However, it was pointed out, the Committee is still far short of the total amount of money needed to carry on the work of remodeling and restoring both floors.

Jan. 14, 1955

Jan. 14, 1956

Library Will
Be Closed.

On and after Monday, March 3rd, the Atheneum Library will be closed to the public for two weeks or more while the interior is being renovated and painted.

By vote of the Trustees,
Grace Brown Gardner, Sec'y.

Feb. 15, 1957

Yale Professor Tracks Down 200-Year-Old Letter By Ben Franklin To Island Library

A letter written by Benjamin Franklin 200 years ago to a friend in Rhode Island has been unearthed at the Nantucket Atheneum by Dr. Leonard W. Labaree, professor of early American history at Yale University.

The document is of special interest to Nantucketers because Abiah Folger Franklin, Benjamin's mother, was born on the Island.

Although library officials were aware of its existence it was not generally known that the Atheneum possessed such a valuable historical document.

Dr. Labaree is editor of a combined research project of Yale and the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia to prepare a complete comprehensive edition of all the Franklin papers.

The Franklin letter reads:

Philad March 24, 1757

"Dear Sir

"I inclose you some of the grain called Whisk Corn or Broom Corn. It must be planted in Hills like Indian Corn, 3 or 4 Grains to a Hill. It looks like Indian Corn when growing, till the Top comes out, of which they make the Whisk Brushes for velvet, and excellent Brooms. The grain is good and for Fowls, Horses, etc. being a kind of Millet and of great Increase. The Stalks etc. make excellent Thatch. It grows 10 foot high, & I believe must have a little more room than you commonly give your Indian Corn;—but plant it at the same time. When its ripe, gather it; you may strip the seed off by Hand, from the Whisk, or your Fowls will pick it off. Give my dear friend Katy enough of the Top to make a Whisk for her Mantlet, and with it, if you please, a Kiss from me and my best wishes. My respectful compliments to Mrs. Ward & all friends. I expect to sail next Week for England, where if I can be of any Service to you, favour me with your Commands, Directed to me at the Pensile a Coffee House in Birch Lane, London. I am, Dear Sir,

"Your most devoted Servant

"B. Franklin."

The historian said he first heard of the Atheneum letter by a reference to it in an old newspaper clipping.

"A clipping from a scrapbook in the Yale Library gave an account of the finding of the Franklin letter in Nantucket," he said. "From the type we deduced it was probably from the old Boston Transcript of some 30 years ago. The article contained a reprint of the letter, the only time to my knowledge it was ever published."

"Since I had been summering on Nantucket for the past 38 years it was easy for me to track it down," Dr. Labaree said. "The present librarian, Mrs. Irene Smith said she knew of it but was not sure where it was kept. We checked with the retired librarian Miss Clara Parker who said it was kept in the safe in a folder marked 'Valuable Papers.'

The Yale professor said they finally located it in a folder marked "Very Valuable Papers." He said the letter from its handwriting, style and phrasing was definitely authentic.

Dr. Labaree said he had a photostatic copy of the letter made and brought it to New Haven to add to the collection of 27,000 letters and documents written by Franklin or to him from 300 public and private sources.

Three years ago the historian was given a leave of absence from his teaching duties to begin work on the project which he estimates will take 15 to 20 years.

"We have found letters in the most unlikely places," he said. "Recently we found two from Franklin to Yale University presidents in the Karl Marx College in East Germany."

The first part of the project, that of locating the letters, has nearly been completed, he said.

"The finished project will contain 25 to 30 volumes," Dr. Labaree said. "It is supported by a \$400,000 gift from Time Inc. and by a \$175,000 grant from the Philosophical Society which was founded by Franklin in 1743."

The Society contains the largest single collection of Franklin letters in the world and Yale the largest collection of printed books by and about him, the historian said.

"The Nantucket letter to a Mr. Ward of Westerly, R. I., member of a prominent family was written by Franklin after he had visited with him," he explained. "In its discussion of whisk corn it shows a new facet of Franklin's interest."

The reference to Katy was to Catherine Ray Green, a great friend of Franklin's, he said and added that although the couple met only about five times in their entire lives they corresponded for some 30 years.

Dr. Labaree said each document in the edition will be credited to the collection from which it came.

Atheneum Paintings Collection Being Painstakingly Restored.

An important and painstaking work is currently underway in the Sconset home of Mrs. Reginald Bragonier. Mrs. Bragonier is in charge of restoration work on the paintings in the collection of the Nantucket Atheneum. For the ten days preceding July 30th, she had the expert collaboration of Mrs. Janice Hines, of Alexandria, Virginia, specialist in the restoration of old oil paintings, who came to Nantucket from a recent assignment with the Blair House in Washington.

Mrs. Hines and Mrs. Bragonier worked together on one of the Library's Chinese paintings—a rare picture of the Houqua Gardens, brought to the Island by Captain Frederick Sanford.

Because the results from a good job of restoration often seem unbelievable, the popular imagination has credited the cleaner with ingredients resembling an alchemist's tray. But banana pealings and raw potato are not recommended. The real process, as Mrs. Hines and Mrs. Bragonier outlined it for us last Sunday, using the Chinese picture as an example, goes as follows:

First the painting needed relining. The delicate aged canvas on the back, too weak to support the weight of the paint, was cut away and a new stretcher of strong linen prepared. To this the old picture was attached with a solution of waxy formula. Then the front surface was carefully cleaned. (Sometimes each different color requires a different strength of the cleaning solution.) Holes or tears were filled—perhaps the most difficult step, since the weave of the color of the paint and the brushstroke of the artist must be perfectly duplicated. After a thin coat of picture varnish, the painting was ready for removal to its original stretcher, and when absolutely dry, for a rub-down with balsam oil. We saw the finished product on Sunday and can vouch for the efficiency of the system. Not a filled hole was visible and the paint sparkled like new.

Mrs. Bragonier compares the work of the restorer with that of the doctor, each damaged picture, like each patient, an entirely new case. Only time and the climate, the best materials and the greatest care can effect the "cure."

Into Mrs. Hines' studio in Alexandria have passed a fascinating assortment of "patients." There was a Velasquez, two Van Dyck matching portraits, and a golden painting done by Peruvian Indians in the age of the Conquistadors. The last-mentioned, which had been badly burned, required some astute detective work to determine the materials used. In cases like this Mrs. Hines calls in the Bureau of Standards and her "right hand," the Smithsonian. And there are the nameless paintings, punctured by bullets, umbrellas and brooms, and those already worked over by other "restorers," armed with zeal, misinformation and a bottle of floor varnish.

A member of the Alexandria Historical Association, Mrs. Hines has worked on pictures for exhibits there. The Cosmos Club in Washington, home of former Assistant Secretary of State Wells, has asked her to repair the murals and paintings in that collection. And she has recently completed a survey of the portraits of all former Secretaries of State, with a view to repairing these in the fall.

The Library's works do not look a bit incongruous in the Bragonier home. The house itself was transported 125 years ago from the center of town to its present location to serve as a "Chowder House" for its Starbuck owner. In the dooryard is a giant tree, "mother of all the sycamore-maples in Sconset," and here Mrs. Bragonier's mother planted the first climbing-rose, which started the style and eventually gave the village its "trademark."

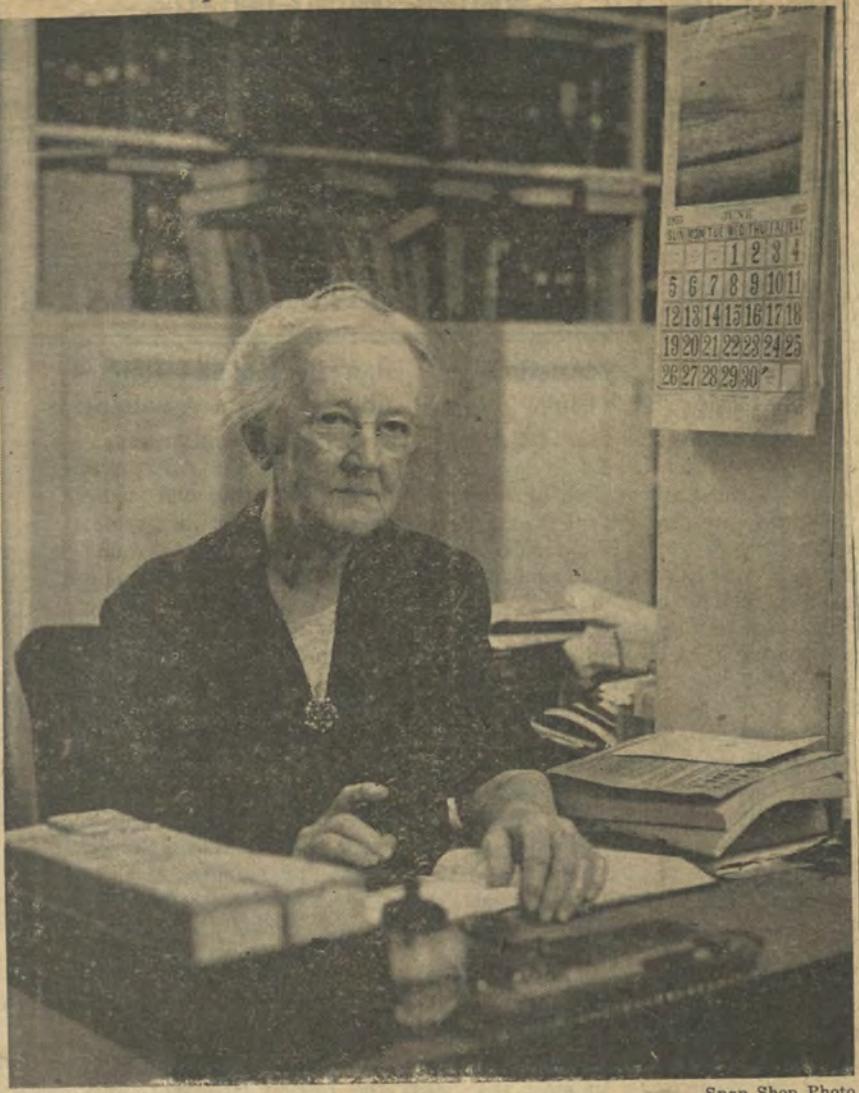
Mrs. Bragonier is going ahead with her work, although the Atheneum has not as yet sufficient funds to cover the project. Any contributions to this necessary—and fascinating—work would, of course, be appreciated.

D. de B.

Aug. 3, 1897

Aug. 29, 1957

Popular Nantucket Librarian to Retire.



Snap Shop Photo

Probably no person is better known to both residents and summer residents of Nantucket than Miss Clara Parker, the Librarian of the Atheneum Library, who has tendered a request for retirement to the Trustees, the retirement to take place this coming January.

Our Library has a unique record of having only three Librarians in its history of over a hundred years. The first was Maria Mitchell from 1836 to 1856; the second Sarah F. Barnard from 1856 to 1906; and in 1906 Miss Parker, who had been connected with the Library as an Assistant since 1898, was elected to the position. Fifty years of service to one institution is an outstanding record, and Miss Parker has surpassed that.

Through these many years Miss Parker has been at her desk serving three generations of readers. Her influence on the reading habits of the thousands whom she has advised and assisted is beyond calculation. For children who are looking for their first picture book stories as well as for research workers on abstruse topics she has cheerfully searched the shelves for the books desired. She has cooperated with the schools in supplying reference books used in the various academic studies, and her services to the "general reader" have been manifold.

And now Miss Parker seeks a well earned rest, with leisure to follow out new interests. For many years she has been a leading authority on Nantucket genealogy and perhaps she will devote more time to that fascinating study. Perhaps she will enjoy other pursuits which require more time than she has been able to spare from the steady and faithful performance of her library routine. In any event, hundreds of people, both islanders and off-islanders, will regret that after the present year they will no longer meet Miss Parker at her desk, but will rejoice at the new opportunities her retirement opens before her, and will wish her much happiness in the years to come.

For the Trustees,
Grace Brown Gardner, Secretary

Atheneum Librarian
Retires; Successor Named

Mrs. Warner G. White of West Chester Street, former librarian in charge of all branch libraries in Buffalo, N. Y. was appointed acting librarian of the Nantucket Atheneum by the board of trustees at the annual proprietors meeting last night.

The temporary appointment was made following the retirement of Miss Clara Parker after 50 year's service. Tribute was paid to Miss Parker "for long and devoted service to the Atheneum and town" and she was presented with a sum of money and appointed Librarian Emerita.

Miss Parker, who succeeded the late Sarah F. Barnum as Atheneum librarian who also served for 50 years, will spend her retirement at her pre-Revolutionary home on Stone Alley which commands a view overlooking the harbor, continuing the genealogy work she has specialized in for many years. An authority on the work, Miss Parker has among her many searches established the antecedents of members of the Thomas Turner Chapter, Sons of the Revolution, on which membership is based. Her searches are made principally from the library's four volumes of the Pollard Papers of Nantucket and the five volumes of the State's Vital Records.

Proprietors elected officers and trustees and heard annual reports. Elected were: Lewis B. Jelleme, president; Henry B. Coleman, vice-president; Mrs. Victor Brown, treasurer; Miss Marjorie Barrett, recording secretary; Miss Grace Brown Gardner, corresponding secretary; and Paul M. Frye, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, the Rev. Bradford Johnson, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Mrs. George MacDonald, Leroy H. True and C. Gerald Snow, trustees.

Mr. True of the library building committee reported work on renovating the second floor of the library which started in late November will be finished in early Summer. Funds for the planned library renovations is far short of the goal of \$65,000. Expressing disappointment only \$16,000 to \$17,000 has been contributed to date, trustees said work on the second floor only can be undertaken now. Other reports were: Mrs. Brown, treasurer's; Miss Parker, librarian's; and Mrs. Congdon, book committee's.

The trustees named Miss Janice Williams, assistant librarian and also made committee appointments from its membership for the year.

The retirement of Mrs. Herbert N. Gibbs, assistant librarian, after 50 years service, because of ill health and the appointment of Miss Williams to the position, was noted by Miss Parker in her report to the proprietors.

For three weeks in July, Miss Williams attended library training classes at the University of New Hampshire and during the interim Mrs. Laura F. Sylvia took over her duties. Miss Marjorie A. Bartlett was appointed filing clerk at the library, a position at one time, held by Miss Williams, which is parttime in the Winter and fulltime in the Summer, Miss Parker reported. Mrs. White filled in this year during vacation periods.

Miss Parker reported she submitted her resignation in October and recalled she was first a general helper, then assistant and finally librarian in 1906. Remodeling of the second floor of the building necessitated the removal of two book shelves on the main floor for a temporary wall, she said. During the year Dietrich G. Tete presented the library with a beautifully carved table which is in use in the main room and is a fine addition, she said.

Library statistics contained in her report follow: books circulated, 28,571 including 17,423 to residents and 6,148 to non-residents; average circulated in month, 1,984; in week, 453; new books, 329; donated, 140; rebound, 4; discarded, 35; books in library, 42,609. Membership cards were issued to 1,149 of which 85 were residents and 1064 non-residents. Magazines and newspapers in library totaled 75 of which 23 were donated. Catalogue cards typed numbered 789.

Jan. 13, 1956

Miss Parker Resigns
From Atheneum Post

Miss Clara Parker, Atheneum librarian for the past half century, has resigned her post, according to library trustees. The resignation becomes effective January 12.

Miss Parker came to the Atheneum in 1898 as second assistant to the librarian, Miss Sarah F. Bernard. Later she became first assistant. She was appointed librarian in 1906 following Miss Bernard's death.

"I'll miss the Atheneum, of course," Miss Parker said yesterday. "But I'm going to enjoy having time of my own and being able to do things just as I want to."

Some 12,000 books were on the shelves when Miss Parker first went to work as second assistant. She said that presently there are about 42,000 volumes available.

Miss Parker's resignation marks the second at the Atheneum within a year. Last May, trustees announced the retirement of Miss Isabelle Gibbs, former first assistant who served nearly 50 years.

The librarian is the third in the Atheneum's history. The first was Maria Mitchell who served from 1836 to 1856. She was succeeded by the late Miss Bernard.

Oct. 21, 1955

Librarian's Last Annual Report Submitted by Miss Parker.

The Library has had an eventful year. Mrs. Herbert N. Gibbs, on account of ill health, retired from the position of Assistant Librarian after serving in that capacity for fifty years. Miss Janice L. Williams was made Acting Assistant and is holding that position at the present time. In July she was given the opportunity to attend a three weeks' training class at the University of New Hampshire for courses in cataloguing and other subjects dealing with the study of Library work. While Miss Williams was in New Hampshire, Mrs. Laura F. Sylvia substituted for her and Miss Marjorie A. Bartlett was appointed to Miss Williams' former position. Miss Bartlett's work includes keeping the books on the shelves in order, mending them when possible, typing, filing, and any work of a similar nature. This work is full time in summer and part time in the winter.

While the Librarians were having their annual vacations, Mrs. Warner G. White, a former children's librarian in New York, was the substitute.

In October, Miss Clara Parker asked to be retired from the position of librarian after fifty-seven years' service, starting first as general helper then assistant and finally was given the position as Librarian in August 1906, which has been held by her until 1956.

Work of remodeling the second floor of the building has recently been started. In order to carry on this work a temporary wall has been set in the main room and two of the bookstacks have been moved, making the main room rather crowded.

The beautiful table, with a great deal of carving on it, that stands in the main room, was given by Mr. Dietrich G. Tete. It has been very much admired and is a fine addition to the room.

Respectfully submitted,
Clara Parker, Librarian
Nantucket Atheneum Library
Following are interesting statistics:
No. books circulated 23,571
No. books circulated to residents 17,423
No. books circulated to nonresidents 6,148
Av. No. circulated per month 1,964
Av. No. circulated per week 453
Books added 329
Books donated 140
Books rebound 4
Books discarded 35
Total No. books in library 42,609
No. membership cards issued 1,149
No. to residents 85
No. to nonresidents 1,064
Magazines and newspapers used in library 75
Magazines and newspapers donated 23
Cards typed for catalogue 789

Nantucket Genealogist Honored by American Institute.

Miss Clara Parker, Librarian at the Nantucket Atheneum Library, has been honored for her work in Nantucket genealogical and historical research by being included in the list of the leading active genealogical researchers in the United States in the *Handbook of American Genealogy* recently issued by the Institute of American Genealogy of Chicago.

As a result of her national recognition in this field Miss Parker is afforded access to the extensive lineage files of the National Clearing House for Genealogical Information, as well as professional contact with genealogists in over a thousand counties in the United States and sixteen foreign countries, which will enable her to expand the scope of her work very materially.

It will be of interest to the members and prospective members, and especially to the registrars of the daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Colonial Dames, and others of the hereditary-patriotic societies to learn that local resident has formed these international contacts, because they will make possible the necessary genealogical research to qualify them for membership without outside aid.

Miss Parker merits the honor bestowed by the Institute. She has compiled many lists of "family trees" in her research and Nantucket descendants from nearly every state in the Union have requested Miss Parker's aid in tracing their ancestry. Requests have come from as far away as Australia to the Nantucket librarian.

Valuable Chinese Paintings At Atheneum.

By Mrs. Raynor M. Gardiner

As the work of preserving and improving the Atheneum proceeds, the second floor will provide space for the exhibition of the Chinese pictures as well as many other valuable items treasured by the Atheneum.

Above five shelves of books in the children's corner hangs (or rather, leans, for there is hardly room for it to hang) a large picture of a Chinese garden. The painting is about five feet long by three and a half feet high. The greens, reds and blues are as bright as if the artist had painted it last year and not early in the XIX century. There is none of the suggestive subtlety that we are accustomed to in Chinese art. The bridge, the pagoda, the blossoming plants are all meticulously drawn and painted.

This picture is one of a set of six Chinese paintings of Houqua's garden willed to the Atheneum by Mr. Frederick Sanford, whose portrait hangs in the Atheneum reading room. Three others are hung above the novels, and two are not shown. Mr. Sanford was born in Nantucket, and after he retired from his San Francisco post as shipping agent for the New York firm of A. A. Low & Co., he came back to Nantucket and lived for many years in the big white house on the corner of Broad and Federal Streets.

In San Francisco he traded with the Far East, and the story goes that he told the captains of the ships of Low and Co. to bring him back some Chinese paintings. The ship paintings now hung in the Atheneum and the six paintings of Houqua's garden came home to Nantucket with Mr. Sanford and were hung in his house. He willed them all to the Atheneum.

The great Chinese merchant, Houqua, was the richest and most powerful of all the Chinese who traded with the foreigners in Canton. Until 1842, the waterfront in Canton was the only place where the Chinese would allow "foreign devils" to set foot. All the Chinese business with the world outside was transacted there. Houqua's gardens were famous for their beauty, great size, and charming arrangement. There were walks, teahouses, bridges over streams, and terraces. In one of the Atheneum paintings, Chinese ladies are playing badminton.

Although the Chinese artists did not sign their paintings, sometimes there was a stamp, a sort of stencil, on the back, with the name of the artist. The Atheneum paintings are not signed. Often a well-established Chinese artist would have a large studio, and employ lesser-known artists to work for him. In the Peabody Museum, in Salem, there is a small wash drawing which carefully depicts such a studio. One can see a large rectangular room, the walls hung with small pictures, sometimes five copies of the same picture in a row. At five tables five Chinese artists are painting; one of the tables resembles a lady's dressing table with a mirror. A servant in the background is entering with a tea tray. All is diligence and order.

It may be that these paintings of Houqua's gardens were done in this way under the supervision of a well-known master.

The Metropolitan Museum of New York hung two of this set of six in their beautiful loan exhibition, "The Chinese Trade and Its Influence," in 1941. A report of this exhibition is in the files of the Atheneum.

Mr. Edouard Stackpole, curator of the Marine Historical Association, of Mystic, Connecticut, says that the filigree frames of native wood, carved in a charming pattern, are interesting for themselves. There are some excellent examples of such frames in the Museum in Mystic.

Many of us who have had long association with the Atheneum are happy in the prospect that these charming Chinese pictures will soon be hung where they will have good light and give pleasure to all who see them.

Feb. 21, 1956

For the *Inquirer and Mirror*.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I last month received a communication from Mrs. Lucy C. Bartlett, daughter of the late Hon. Samuel H. Jenks, from which I make the following extract:—"Mother (Mrs. S. H. Jenks) desires me to write to you, as she is physically disabled just now. She has some newspapers which she would like to send to the Nantucket Atheneum,—the first newspapers which were ever published on the island,—the *Nantucket Gazette*, published in 1816, which did not live quite a year, and the *Nantucket Magazine*, published the following year, also short-lived, want of patronage being the cause. There are one or two numbers missing from the files, and the papers are more or less dilapidated. She would like to know if they would be of any value to the Atheneum, or worth sending. If you think favorably of her proposition, she will send them next week by a South Boston young man who proposes visiting the island, and will put them in your care, thinking that you might perhaps like to look them over." I replied to Mrs. Bartlett that the papers would be a very valuable acquisition to the Atheneum. They were sent as proposed, and the perusal of them has afforded me much pleasure. They will, I doubt not, be exceedingly interesting to the reading portion of this community, which comprises about the whole.

Two years since a son of Mr. Tannatt, the publisher and editor of the *Gazette and Magazine*, called on me to see if I could give him some information respecting his father. I told him I well remembered his father, and was (although a boy only thirteen years of age) a subscriber to his paper. I remember he saw in a newspaper a statement that the island of Bermuda had more tons of shipping per capita than any other port in the world. He collated and published the statistics of Nantucket, and ascertained from them, that we beat Bermuda on the principle stated, half a ton. Among other reminiscences, I related that his father, in passing on the street one day, was hailed by a comrade in my hearing, who said, "How are you, Mr. Tannatt?" "I don't tell," was his prompt reply. "That was my father right over," said his son, while laughing heartily. "O," he said, "I would give almost anything if I could see one of the papers that he published here." Now, I have no doubt he would have given a very liberal sum for the *Gazette and Magazine*, but Mrs. Jenks has generously and befittingly donated them to the Atheneum, a legitimate and proper archive for all documents and papers relating to the history of this interesting island. A. G. Tannatt & Co., carry on the business of card and job printing at Springfield, Mass. Mr. Tannatt gave me a second call last summer, and when he learns that his father's papers can be seen by a call at the Atheneum, another summer will not pass without his presence here.

W. R. EASTON.

Sept. 27, 1959

THE NEED OF A HALL.—The need of a hall for hops and fairs will soon be apparent, especially when the Atlantic Hall building is removed, as it will be in the fall. The Atheneum will then be the only large one left us, and in its present arrangements is unfitted for the class of entertainments mentioned above, on account of the trouble and expense of removing the cumbersome settees. This can be obviated, and we trust and believe will be, by fitting the hall with sectional opera chairs, which are easily handled. If this is done, the hall will derive an increased revenue.

ATHENEUM MUSEUM.

THE wonders contained in this Museum are many and varied, and include articles from all portions of the globe, both from the sea and land. Among the more prominent curiosities here on exhibition, are the mammoth Sperm Whale's Jaw, seventeen feet in length, models of the Camels formerly used to take loaded ships over the bar, and a correct painting of a Whaling Scene, which is rendered more interesting by the janitor's clear explanation. Not a visitor to the island should fail to stroll in among the curios.

The Museum is open from 8 A. M. to 5 P. M. Admission 15 cents. Parties desirous of entering in the evening, can do so on application to the subscriber.

JOSEPH S. SWAIN.

1880

1879

1883

Bequests and Gifts

DONATION TO THE MUSEUM.—William S. Keech, Esq., of Townsontown, Md., has presented the Atheneum Museum with a portion of an ancient French quilt, which he inherited from his grandmother, and which is supposed to have been printed some time between the destruction of the Bastile and the beheading of Louis XVI. It is an interesting piece of cloth, covered with ancient sketches appertaining to the French revolution, and is a valuable acquisition to the museum.

1881
BEQUEST TO THE NANTUCKET ATHENEUM.—It will be highly gratifying to all the friends of this institution to learn that the late Hon. George B. Upton has left to it, the sum of *five hundred dollars* by his will, "to be judiciously expended in books." Such a gift is quite in keeping with Mr. Upton's general character and career, and is but another evidence of the generous public spirit and interest in every good work for which he was always distinguished. The will also contains liberal bequests to the Sailors' Snug Harbor, Associations for the relief of aged people, and other benevolent institutions.

1874
BEQUESTS.—By the will of William Hadwen, Esq., lately deceased, he has given, among his public bequests, to the Nantucket Atheneum, two thousand dollars, to the second Congregational Society, (Unitarian) two thousand dollars, and one thousand to the Ladies' Howard Society.

1868
FOR THE ATHENEUM.—Mrs. George B. Upton has presented the Atheneum library with a fine portrait, in crayon, of her late husband, who was one of the most liberal contributors in founding that institution. Mr. Upton made a liberal bequest at his death for its maintenance. The picture will be highly appreciated by all who visit the library.

1878
One of the relics of the sea-fight recorded above—an old chair which came ashore from the Queen—was sold at auction on Wednesday last by A. M. Myrick, and purchased by Mr. Joseph B. Macy for the Atheneum. The Douglass, Queen and Sir Sydney Smith were all prizes of the Neufchatel, privateer, and all three brought up on our shores or the shoals around our island.

MINIATURE WHALING SCENE.—We last week noticed that Mr. William H. Chase, 2d, had completed the miniature whaling scene he has been making for the Atheneum Museum. We have been shown the piece of work, which is certainly a masterpiece, and will bear the closest criticism, being faithfully executed in every detail. It represents a whaleboat, manned by the usual crew of six men in the act of taking a whale. The boat-steerer has peaked his oar, and buried his first iron in the animal, and is preparing to dart a second. The crew have their oars clear of the water (which latter is exceedingly well pictured) ready to "stern all" at the word, while the officer has grasped the steering-oar ready to swing his frail craft from the monster's reach. The tub and line, lances, &c., are faithfully portrayed, the line being turned about the loggerhead under the control of the officer. The whale is represented as spouting blood, while the water about the iron in his body is dyed with the crimson fluid for some little distance. A second whale is sporting near by, and adds a little to the interest of the piece. The whole is enclosed in a neat, glass case, and will be exhibited in the Lodge Building, on Main street, this evening, that those who are interested may have a chance to view it. A small admission—five cents each—will be charged. We have no doubt but Mr. Chase will receive many and well-deserved compliments for the skill and ingenuity he has displayed in this work.

Nov. 18, 1876

Proposition for Compromise.
In the matter of appeal by Mrs. Mary C. Sanford, from the allowance of the will of her husband, the late F. C. Sanford, a proposition for a compromise has been offered by Mr. Scott, the executor, said to be satisfactory to the widow. The proposition is that instead of the distribution as provided by will, the legatees accept the following.

\$6,000 to certain legatees named.
50,000 to Mrs. Scott absolutely.
23,000 to Unitarian Society, absolutely.
23,000 to the Town of Nantucket, absolutely.
26,000 to the Atheneum. The library and pictures to remain in Mrs. Sanford's house until her decease.

By this plan it is claimed if all parties in interest consent, all risk of loss and expense will be saved, the residuary legatees will have the amounts set apart at once, and the widow and daughter will be enabled to enjoy their proportions free from trusteeships.

At a meeting of the trustees of the Atheneum, held Monday evening, it was unanimously voted to accept the proposition, subject to ratification by the proprietors at the annual meeting. As the case does not come before the court until April, it will be time enough for the town to take action at the regular annual meeting.

OBITUARY.

FREDERICK COLEMAN SANFORD died at his residence in Nantucket on Wednesday forenoon, after a brief illness, at the age of 81 years, 6 months, and 10 days. In early life Mr. Sanford made a whaling voyage, but not inclining to the sea, he learned a watchmaker's trade, and engaged in this occupation a number of years, being at one period a partner with Hon. James Easton. He also engaged in the whaling industry, and at one time was regarded as an expert upon all the matters pertaining to it. In fact, up to the time of his death, his general knowledge of the rise and decline of the whalefishery throughout the world, including the names of ships and masters engaged therein, was, perhaps, the most thorough of any man. He likewise took an active interest in matters pertaining to our island history and its genealogy. In 1849 he went to California, and there acted as consignee and agent for the ships of A. A. Low & Co., of New York, where he obtained a competence. He returned in 1852, but was induced to try the business at the Golden Gate again. Subsequently he went to England as agent for the sale of the ship Great Republic, when he returned to his island home to pass the remainder of his days in comparative retirement and literary ease.

The most of his yearly income, since his retirement, he has expended in Nantucket in reclaiming abandoned farms and the general improvement thereof. In religious concerns he was liberal, and long identified with the Unitarian church and society, contributing liberally for their support. In politics he was originally a Democrat, voting for Jackson for President when he received only 13 votes in Nantucket. Subsequently, when the slavery question came into politics, he joined ranks with the Republicans and was steadfast with that party till the last.

Mr. Sanford was chosen president of the Pacific National Bank in 1868, and continued in that office till his death. He was a man of positive convictions and strong prejudices, yet of easy and affable manners. Possessing a most retentive memory, he became a fluent and graceful conversationalist upon events connected with the maritime history of Nantucket, upon which he always took delight in recounting the heroic deeds of the ancient whaler and the business integrity of the old-time merchant.

In many particulars Mr. Sanford was a remarkable man, retaining his mental vigor and physical robustness and cheerfulness up to about two years ago, when a paralytic stroke admonished him that age was exacting, since which time he has gradually declined, until his last illness ended life. He will be missed from our streets and public places, and many who shared his bounty, and even those who shared his confidences, will lament his loss. He leaves a wife and one married daughter, who have the sympathy and condolences of his numerous friends and fellow citizens in their sad bereavement.

Correspondence of the Inquirer and Mirror.

The Sanford Will.

It is with reluctance that I address this communication to the people of Nantucket. But as I am a voter in New Bedford (although I may be present next week at the Town Meeting), yet I have no right to speak. I therefore take this method of submitting some considerations relative to the will of the late F. C. Sanford, and the proposition of compromise offered by Thomas A. Scott, Mr. Sanford's executor.

Certain items of news concerning the Sanford estate have recently appeared, both in Nantucket and New Bedford papers. They have evidently been written by the same person. He attempts to persuade the voters of Nantucket to reject the proposition offered by Mr. Scott. If he had stated the case fairly, this communication would have been unnecessary. But he has so distorted the situation that I deem it expedient to make a statement which shall present the whole matter. I never knew the Nantucket voters to go astray when all the facts were before them. My only concern will be to place before them the facts essential to their decision.

The town of Nantucket is interested only in three provisions of Mr. Sanford's will: One-third of the remainder is devoted to the Town. This will amount to \$22,000. Mrs. Sanford has the income of \$50,000, with full power to use the principal. One-third of what is left at her death is devoted to the Town. Mrs. Scott has the income of \$50,000, with full power to use the principal. If her husband survives her, he receives the principal; otherwise, one-third of this is devoted to the town. Thus it is evident that the most the Town ever can receive is \$55,000. It is not at all likely that the Town will ever derive any benefit from the legacy given to Mrs. Scott. Providing Mrs. Sanford does not use the principal, at her death the Town has the benefit of \$36,000. It is to be remembered that the Town receives nothing until her death, and if she uses all the principal, the Town has the benefit of only \$22,000.

This fund is to be held by a trustee, appointed by the Court. He will deduct his fees from the revenue and pay the balance to the Town. If he errs in judgment in making investment, he may not be liable for the mistake, and so the fund may be lost. At most, the income will not average over 4 per cent., and after charges of trustee are deducted, the Town will receive about \$1,300 each year. This is to be expended exclusively in repairing highways. If the Town receives the income from \$22,000 only, then the annual benefit will be about \$700, and it cannot be used for any purpose other than for roads.

So if the provisions of the will stand after Mrs. Sanford's death, the Town will receive a small annuity, with danger of being greatly diminished by loss of the fund. The fund itself can never be touched. It is held by the trustee forever, unless he loses it. The only advantage of this is that the Town will have to appropriate less for highways. Tax-payers will be benefited by a deduction of their tax, amounting to about 5 per cent. Indeed, even with this help, the Town may appropriate as much as now, and then taxes will be no smaller.

1875
Feb. 21, 1897
over

Aug. 16, 1899

Now it is proposed to redistribute Mr. Sanford's estate, and it can be done if all the legatees agree. Instead of the income of an uncertain amount after Mrs. Sanford's death, with danger of loss by mistakes of the trustee, which income can be used only for highways, the Town is offered \$23,000, payable at once. If received, this amount will be in the Town's treasury, subject to its own disposal. There will be no trustee to pay and no loss of the fund. Moreover, the fund can be used wholly or in part, without any restraint, for any purpose the Town decides. It may be devoted to a town house, which the Town sadly needs; a steam fire engine, which the Town must have some time; to some system of sewers; or to any use that the voters determine. Any of these uses would be of much greater and lasting benefit to the Town than the wasting of a small annuity on the sandy roads of Nantucket. It is altogether likely, if Mr. Sanford had made his will shortly before his death, he would have made provision for the town house, which he often admitted the Town greatly needed. His will was

made over five years before his death. For my own part, I should be glad to see the whole or a part of the fund expended in a town house, which would be a credit to Nantucket and a monument to Mr. Sanford's beneficence, and of the greatest utility to all the inhabitants of the island. In this way the fund would be distributed among Nantucket's common people.

It has been asserted that a will is sacred and ought to stand. But a man's first duty is to remember his family. If he overlooks them, they have a right to demand what he ought to have given them. Mrs. Sanford, the faithful wife for over half a century, had a right to expect different provision from that made for her. She has taken the appeal from the decree allowing her husband's will, with a view to securing to herself what is rightly her due, and at the same time to secure to the Unitarian Church, the Atheneum and the Town, a large amount, free from restriction and condition. The Atheneum and Church have seen the wisdom of the offer, and have accepted it. Next week the Town, at its annual meeting, will be called upon to determine what action it will take, whether to follow the course so wisely taken by the Atheneum and Church, or reject the offer. If the offer is accepted, the money will be paid as soon as the compromise is approved by the Supreme Court, which will be the coming April.

H. B. WORTH.

NEW BEDFORD, Feb. 17, 1891.

Appealed.

Owing to the appeal from the action of the Probate Court admitting to probate the will of the late Frederick C. Sanford, the instrument itself has become of sufficient public interest to warrant publishing the text thereof entire in this issue. The appeal taken by the widow was filed on the 13th inst., but the grounds of appeal have not yet been filed. The widow's right to waive the provisions made for her under the will, and claim her portion under the statutes is unquestioned. But this might have been accomplished by simply filing such a writing within six months after probate. The public bequests were intended to be munificent, but they are not all clearly expressed, and some of doubtful expediency. The will was drawn as late as 1885, and is said to have been written by the late Judge Prescott of New Bedford. Mr. Sanford, we have been told, had prepared a will as early as 1876, which was written by the late Henry W. Paine, Esq., of Boston. The three principal bequests from the residue, and subject to some contingencies, are, without controversy, what the testator fully desired and designed. Whether wisely ordered or not, they were the testator's will and not repugnant to public policy. No one will suppose that he was unduly influenced in disposing of his estate, and his mental competency can hardly be questioned. It is a source of regret that Mr. Sanford did not provide against all contingencies in making public bequests, which could have so easily been done. Yet it does not appear that any of the public bequests will be affected by this appeal, except, perhaps in the amounts that may be found available from the residue.

Be it rembered that I, Frederick C. Sanford, of Nantucket, in the County of Nantucket, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of full age, and of sound and disposing mind and memory, with a firm reliance on the mercy of Almighty God, and in the redeeming power of the teachings of Jesus Christ, and with good will to all mankind, do make, publish and declare, this my last will and testament, in manner following, to wit:

First—I order all my just debts and funeral expenses to be paid as soon as is convenient.

Second—I order and direct my executor, hereinafter named, to set apart out of my estate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000), the same to be safely invested, and the income paid to my wife, Mary C. Sanford, semi-annually, during her life; and if the income, with her other means, shall not be sufficient for her comfortable and suitable support, then so much of the principal of said fund may be used and applied from time to time, as may be necessary for that purpose.

Third—I also give to my said wife, Mary, during her life, my dwelling house, lot, barn and garden in Nantucket. I also give to her during her life, the use of all my household furniture and indoor moveables, silver plate, pictures, china, horses, carriages, harnesses, garden tools, and so much of my library, books, and papers as she may wish to use and have the care of during her life. And my said wife shall have the right and power to sell and dispose of any of the above-named articles of personal property that she may deem it advisable to sell, except the books and papers and silver plate, she accounting to the executor for the proceeds of such sales.

Fourth—I order and direct my executor to set apart out of my estate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000), said sum to be safely invested, and the interest and income of the same used and applied to the support and maintenance of my daughter, Amelia C. Scott, wife of Thomas A. Scott, of Boston, during her life. And if the income, with her other means of support shall not be sufficient for her comfortable and suitable support, then so much of the principal of said fund shall be used and applied from time to time, as may be necessary for that purpose. Should the said Thomas A. Scott survive his said wife Amelia, then I give and devise the Fifty Thousand Dollars herein given for the support of the said Amelia, or so much thereof as may then remain, to him, said Thomas, to him and his heirs forever for the love I have for him. And should the said Thomas A. Scott survive my said wife, Mary, then I give and devise to him my dwelling house and lot, barn and garden in Nantucket, together with all my household furniture and utensils, silver plate, china and crockery ware and horses, carriages, and harnesses then remaining.

Fifth.—I give to "The Nantucket Atheneum," a corporation duly established by law at Nantucket, my portrait, and all my pictures, books, papers and library—subject to the right of my wife to have such use of them as she may desire during her life.

Sixth.—I give and bequeath unto my nephew, Edward Sanford, son of my brother Edward, the sum of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000), and all my wardrobe, my watch, studs, jewelry, spectacles, canes, and everything pertaining to personal use and ornament.

Seventh.—I give and bequeath to my niece, Mary C. Maxwell, the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000), should she be living at my decease. If she shall not be then living, the said Two Thousand Dollars shall go to my nephew, the said Edward Sanford.

Eighth.—I give and bequeath to the nephew of my wife, Edward Low Allen, the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000).

Ninth.—All the rest, residue and remainder of my property and estate, of every kind, I order and direct to be divided into three equal parts; and I give and devise one of said parts to "The Nantucket Atheneum," the corporation above-named, and one of said parts, I give and devise to "The Second Congregational Meeting-house Society, in Nantucket" (Unitarian), a corporation duly established by law at Nantucket, the interest and income of the same to be used and applied in paying the current expenses of the said society so long as the present organization exists, and said society is Unitarian in faith and belief. But when the present organization of said society shall cease, or when said society shall cease to be Unitarian in faith and belief, then said legacy shall go in equal shares to, and I give and devise the same in equal shares, to "The Nantucket Atheneum," above-named, and to the Inhabitants of the Town of Nantucket, a municipal corporation duly established by law. The other said part I give and devise to said corporation, "The Inhabitants of the Town of Nantucket."

The interest and income of the legacies given in this will to the Inhabitants of the Town of Nantucket to be expended on the public roads of said Town of Nantucket, as the citizens of said Town, at the Annual Town Meeting of said Town, may determine by their votes.

Tenth.—I authorize and empower my executor to sell and convey, by public or private sale, any part or all of my real estate, whenever he may deem it for the interest of all concerned so to do; provided, however, that my dwelling house and lot, and barn, and garden shall not be sold during the life of my wife, without her consent in writing.

Lastly.—I do hereby appoint my son-in-law, the said Thomas A. Scott, executor of this my last will and testament, and I request that he be not required to give bond as such to the Judge of Probate.

In witness whereof, I have hereto set my hand and seal this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five.

FREDERICK C. SANFORD. : SEAL :
.....

Signed, sealed, published and declared by the said Frederick C. Sanford as and for his will and testament in presence of us, who, at his request, and in his presence, have hereto set our names as witnesses.

DAVID PARKER,
RICHARD E. CONGDON,
ALBERT G. BROCK.

NANTUCKET, MASS., Nov. 25, 1885.

Be it known that I, Frederick C. Sanford, of Nantucket, do make and ordain the following as a Codicil to my last Will and Testament:

Whereas, in my said will I have bequeathed and devised one-third of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate to the Inhabitants of the Town of Nantucket for certain purposes therein expressed, now, therefore, I hereby revoke said legacy of one-third of the rest, residue and remainder, and I give, devise and bequeath said one-third of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate to my wife, Mary C. Sanford, for and during the term of her natural life. At her decease said one-third I give, devise and bequeath to the Inhabitants of the Town of Nantucket, for the purposes expressed in my said will.

I hereby confirm and ratify my said will in all other respects, except as changed by this Codicil.

In witness of whereby, I have hereto set my hand and seal this—day of April, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine.

FREDERICK C. SANFORD. : SEAL :
.....

Signed, sealed, published by the said Frederick C. Sanford, as and for a Codicil to his last will and testament, in presence of us, who, at his request, in his presence, and in presence of each other, hereto set our names as witnesses.

ALMON T. MOWRY,
ALBERT G. BROCK,
GEORGE W. S. FIELD

A true copy,
Attest, BENJAMIN F. BROWN, Register

Nov. 29, 1890.

This Is Your Library



It Has Served Nantucket Well YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW

A sum of \$65,000 is required

to preserve the historic structure and improve the present facilities, in order to better serve the educational and cultural needs of our community.

Checks should be made payable to the

NANTUCKET ATHENEUM P & I FUND
5 Center Street
Nantucket, Massachusetts

Aug. 26, 1955

"The Library" Needs Our Help.

The Nantucket Atheneum, which was originally a private institution, has served the cultural needs of the island's people over the years. It seems a very important part of Nantucket, for even though the average person may not visit the building more than one or twice a year, there is always the knowledge that he, or anyone else, may enter and pick out whatever book he wishes to read at his leisure.

"The Library", as it is referred to so often, is now supported partially by Town and State funds, although it is managed by a Board of Trustees elected each year by its Proprietors, or shareholders.

At the 100th Anniversary of the present Atheneum building, a committee was set up to study the possibility of remodelling the interior of the library, in order to make it more convenient and modern. In the intervening nine years, this committee has worked toward what is now the goal of the present appeal to the public—modernization of the library facilities.

At one time "Atheneum Hall" was almost the only building in Nantucket with a seating capacity large enough for plays, minstrel shows, and the like, and the hall, located on the second floor of the present building, was in great demand. Gradually new fire and safety regulations were imposed until the hall could no longer be used. It is still there, stage and all, but can be used only for the storage of unused books.

The plans for modernization of the interior of the building include particularly this unused second floor. Supporting pillars will solidly brace the floor, and a large reading room and additional book shelves are to be constructed. Many more improvements will create a new library building of which the entire community may be proud, while preserving the dignified historic exterior.

A general appeal for funds for the preservation and improvement of the Nantucket Atheneum was started recently. The sum of \$65,000 is required in order to make the work possible. Everyone should give as much as they are able, for every dollar makes the continuation of the library more certain.

It should be remembered that, unlike so many appeals for funds which face us every day, this is unusual in that it is the first appeal for funds which has been made in 109 years by the Nantucket Atheneum.

Sept. 10, 1955

Nantucket Atheneum Makes First Appeal For Funds In Over One Hundred Years.

For the first time since the summer of 1846, one hundred and nine years ago, the Nantucket Atheneum goes to the people of Nantucket in an appeal for funds to improve and preserve the present historic structure.

The plans for this project, which the Nantucket Atheneum Preservation and Improvement Fund Committee have received from the well-known architectural firm of Cram and Ferguson, provide the physical plant necessary for the running of an up-to-date community library, and at the same time for the preservation of the classic lines of the outside of the building.

The conception of the need for this work is not new. Dr. Will Gardner, the honorary chairman of the Nantucket Atheneum Preservation and Improvement Fund Committee, recognized what had to be done in 1947 at the 100th anniversary of the Atheneum, and these present plans are the result of a great amount of work and thought during the past nine years.

Nantucket has always felt great pride in her history and tradition. In the Atheneum we have the oldest building built, and still used as a library in this Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This in itself is a treasure to be preserved.

In addition, this historic building lends itself to the creation of an exceptional library filling the educational and cultural needs of the entire community.

Presently, the physical plant is not adequate. The architectural plans provide for adequate shelf room; separate reading rooms for adults, young

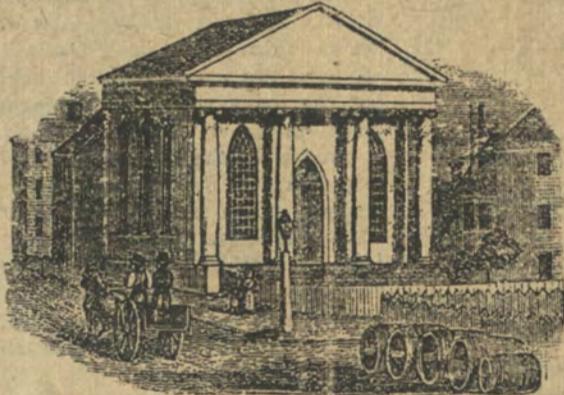
adults, and children; quarters for research students; a proper vault for the safekeeping of valuable historical material; a book lift; adequate fire protection; proper lighting; a librarian's room; a work room for the staff, and modern lavatories. These plans will utilize the entire structure as they include reopening the spacious second floor.

In July of 1846, the Nantucket Atheneum burned to the ground in the great fire. A meeting of the Proprietors was held shortly thereafter for the purpose of forming committees to solicit contributions from the community to rebuild this cultural center of Nantucket life.

The response was more than gratifying, and in little more than six months the project of rebuilding was completed. Nantucket had once more risen to the emergency and the cultural gap was filled.

Now, for the first time since that emergency in August of 1846, the Atheneum needs help. A sum of \$65,000 is needed to preserve the historic structure and improve existing facilities to create an up-to-date library, a most important part of the educational and cultural life of a community.

The Board of Trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum hope all of us will want to share in this project, and make possible the Preservation and Improvement of the Nantucket Atheneum. Checks may be made payable to the Preservation and Improvement Committee of the Nantucket Atheneum, whose office is located at 5 Centre Street, Nantucket.



The Original Nantucket Atheneum Library

Aug. 27, 1955

Salary: 50 Cents a Month!

To a group this week Dr. Will Gardner said:

"It's true—I worked for the Atheneum Library for fifty cents a month and all the books I could read—and I think it was the highest salary I ever received.

"Miss Sarah F. Barnard, librarian from 1856 to 1906, asked me to come to the library about an hour before closing time Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and two hours Saturday evening to put on the shelves the books that had been returned.

"To be asked to be in this private library where only the 'proprietors' were allowed was a privilege in itself; and as to reading books, I was in the Horatio Alger and Oliver Optic stage and I had visions of the many books of that type that must be in such a fine library.

"What never entered my mind was that Sarah F. Barnard would become the never-to-be-forgotten guide of my reading.

"Even today, seventy-five years later, I can sometimes hear her quiet, deep-toned voice:

"William, would you care to read other interesting books than those by Horatio Alger and Oliver Optic?"

"Before I could reply, she continued, 'Did you ever read the stories of the Greek heroes?' Already the book was in her hand and her finger marked a definite page with its interesting story.

"Of course I took the book home and experienced a different type of thrill as I was caught by the aspirations, the struggles, the rewards and punishments that fill the Greek and Latin classics.

"Frequently when I returned to her desk to fill my arms with books to be shelved, I would find her with finger in a book prepared to interest me in some definite passage or incident. I realize now that she was making me feel that I had a companion in reading, a yearning we all have. In this way she led me into the Rollo books (not all twenty-eight) and introduced me to Audubon and his birds and even found something to interest me in the newly published Scientific American which was sought after by many boys of the day.

"Every Saturday night I escorted Miss Barnard to her Orange Street home in the 'block'. She was slightly crippled, so with her hand on my arm we walked slowly along the streets after the 'nine o'clock bell' had given the signal for the closing of the library.

"Arriving at her steps she would bend over on one side as she sought the bottom of the big pocket in her skirt; withdrawing her hand she would give me a fifty-cent piece and say: 'William, you have been a very great help to me this month. Thank you.'

"This was my introduction to the wonderful world of books. College became a must.

"And now after many years I have returned to Nantucket Island and serve as a trustee of this library where I worked as a boy for fifty cents a month.

"Today the call has come to all lovers of Nantucket to help this library which fifty years ago responded to the need of the town and ceased to limit its use to 'proprietors and their friends', but opened its doors as a 'free library'.

"After more than fifty years of service to the public it must have help, the foundation piers built on ashes must be repaired, columns must be installed to strengthen the upper floor and a long list of 'musts' face the trustees in order to continue the library and enable it to give the service the town should have.

"Many friends of the library have sent gifts, all with deep interest in the cultural life of the island. I join these friends and with great happiness and each month and on the last Saturday of the month, put a gift into the mail, remembering with great gratitude and some inner merriment, the large salary that came to me as a boy, a salary that no gift can ever fully repay."

Sept. 10, 1955

Dr. W. E. Gardner Urges Library Fund Donations

Dr. William Gardner, retired Episcopal minister and author, who as a boy worked for the Atheneum Library for 50 cents a month and credits the venerable Island institution with having provided the foundation for college and his career has added his voice to the current appeal for \$65,000 to renovate the building—the oldest in the country still used as a library.

"It's true," said Dr. Gardner "I worked for the Atheneum Library for 50 cents a month and all the books I could read, and I think it was the highest salary I ever received. Miss Sarah F. Barnard, librarian from 1856 to 1906, asked me to the library about an hour before closing time Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and two hours Saturday evenings to put on the shelves returned books. To be asked to be in this private library where only the 'proprietors' were allowed was a privilege in itself and as to reading books, I was in the Horatio Alger and Oliver Optic stage and I had visions of the many books of that type that must be in such a fine library.

"This was my introduction to the wonderful world in books. College became a must. And now after many years I have returned to Nantucket Island and serve as a trustee of this Library where I worked as a boy for 50 cents a month.

"Today the call has come to all lovers of Nantucket to help this library which 50 years ago responded to the need of the town and ceased to limit its use to 'proprietors and their friends', but opened its door as a 'free library'.

"What never entered my mind was that Sarah F. Barnard would become the never-to-be-forgotten guide of my reading. Even today, 72 years later, I can sometimes hear her quiet deep-toned voice: 'William, would you care to read other interesting books than those by Horatio Alger and Oliver Optic?' Before I could reply she continued: 'Did you ever read the stories of the Greek heroes?' Already the book was in her hand and her finger marked a definite page with its interesting story. Of course I took the book home and experienced a different type of thrill as I was caught by the aspirations, the struggles, the rewards and punishments that fill the Greek and Latin classics. Frequently when I returned to her desk to fill my arms with books to be shelved, I would find her with finger in a book prepared to interest me in some definite passage or incident. I realize now that she was making me feel that I had a companion in reading, a yearning we all have. In this way she led me into the Rollo books (not all twenty-eight) and introduced me to Audubon and his birds and even found something to interest me in the newly published Scientific American which was sought after by many boys of the day.

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A Plea for the Atheneum.

Editors of the Inquirer and Mirror:

May I, through your columns, make an appeal for the Atheneum Library? The special interest is a department of music, to contain classical and other high-grade selections of vocal and instrumental numbers for the use and study of the occasional person with musical ambition.

A summer visitor recently asked if I had a copy of Handel's "Messiah". I found one in the attic, in a bundle with about 30 others. It was only then that the futility of their storage in the attic occurred to me.

Inquiry of Mrs. Smith, librarian, and Mr. Jelleme, Atheneum president, found a welcoming response for the library, so I located further a quantity of grand opera librettos, comic opera scores (including Gilbert & Sullivan, and Victor Herbert and De-Koven) and a few symphonies, sonatas, and other classics, which I have taken to the Atheneum.

This letter is an appeal to all those who, like myself, are storing glorious music which they will never use, to dig it up for the library. The musical consciousness of Nantucket is sadly lacking, and those in official position to do something about it show no sign of active interest. But the future is long, and there are those who can profit from a library collection in the meantime.

While I am quite without authority in the matter, I shall, on request, be happy to call for any material which may be offered.

Howard C. Barber
Nantucket, Mass.

July 28, 1956

Atheneum Library Visited By Nantucket Rotary Club.

Deviating from their usual procedure, the members of the Rotary Club of Nantucket visited the Atheneum during their meeting Wednesday noon, where they were addressed by Lewis Jelleme, president of the Atheneum Library Association. Mr. Jelleme spoke in the newly-renovated "Great Hall" of the building, the club members later inspecting the main floor of the library as well.

Mr. Jelleme said that the Atheneum plays two very important roles or functions in our community, first as a historical building, and second in its function as a library.

He gave a brief outline of the history of the Atheneum, beginning with the year 1820 when the first library was formed on the island. This first library, the Nantucket Mechanic's Social Library, was joined by another in 1823, the Columbian Library Society. The two organizations merged in 1827 resulting in the United Library Association. Out of that was formed the Nantucket Atheneum, which was incorporated in 1834.

The speaker surmised that neither of the two library associations owned a building before their merger. However, the Nantucket Atheneum purchased the Universalist Church for its use. The Universalist Church building stood on the site of the present Atheneum building.

The first Atheneum building was destroyed in the fire of 1846, together with its contents. Mr. Jelleme stated that almost immediately Maria Mitchell and her father had a meeting to plan the rebuilding of the library, and work was started almost immediately. He told the Rotarians that he felt it almost unbelievable that this could have been done, as the fire occurred on July 13, the rebuilding of the Atheneum was started in August, and it was completed by the first of the next year.

This was done amid complete chaos, he emphasized, stating that the entire business section of the town including approximately 400 buildings was destroyed in the fire. "Despite this the money was raised and the building built—within five months," he commented. "I doubt if this building could be built in five months today."

Mr. Jelleme also mentioned that until this year there had been only three librarians at the Atheneum since its inception. These were Maria Mitchell, who served from 1834 to 1856; Sarah Barnard, from 1856 to 1906; and Clara Parker, from 1906 to 1956. In April of this year Mrs. Raymond Smith, the present librarian, took over the position.

Remarkable about the unusual age of the building, Mr. Jelleme said that this could be used in publicity about Nantucket's antiquity. Many other places have "old mills" and "oldest houses", some of which date earlier than Nantucket's, but in the Atheneum Nantucket has the old building built to be used as a library in the Commonwealth.

Asked what the present work on the building was trying to accomplish, the speaker said that the plans call for more restoration of the building than change. Indicating the "Great Hall" in which his audience was seated, he said that to a large extent it had been restored to the condition it was in 1847. The stage which was built in later years was removed, and the platform and lectern uncovered. It was from this platform that Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke when he dedicated the building.

There have been many additions to the building over the years, and many of these will be removed in order to restore the Atheneum to what it was originally. The "Great Hall" was done first, Mr. Jelleme explained, since it would be a physical impossibility to renovate the entire building all at once. This upstairs hall was never previously used as part of the library, but has now been made into a room primarily to be used for reference and research work.

The renovation of the main floor of the library will begin in another week, and will include the construction of three separate reading rooms, one for adults, one for "young adults", and one for children. Mr. Jelleme said that the architects estimated the total cost of the project would run to \$65,000. Of that total, about \$25,000 has been raised. "We will be able to make a start downstairs and make it a presentable room, but we won't be able to complete the work at this time," he commented.

Among the projects which the committee believes should be undertaken in the near future are the installation of a fire sprinkler system on both floors of the Atheneum building, a walk-in fireproof vault, and an electric book-lift. The first of these, the sprinkler system, would be extremely expensive but would provide important protection against fire, while the vault would be used to store the many valuable documents in the building. The electric book-lift is necessary, Mr. Jelleme explained, in order to get books more easily from one floor to the other.

Mr. Jelleme said that the librarian, Mrs. Smith, has plans in mind which he believes will make the Atheneum an outstanding library in the Commonwealth. Among these plans are the establishment of closer cooperation with the school system than has existed in the past; beginning a "children's hour" for young children during which time small groups will be read to, in order to get them in the habit of going to the library for reading entertainment and information; the establishment of suitable quarters in which serious research work may be done, particularly for visitors and residents interested in the history of Nantucket; and last, an adult recreational program.

Explaining the last point, Mr. Jelleme pointed out that the town spends thousands of dollars annually for the recreation of the children, but nothing has been done for the adults. He re-

marked that on Nantucket we have dozens, perhaps hundreds of shut-ins and all winter long other people take out actual stacks of books for their reading pleasure. "Without a library there would be dozens of people deprived of great pleasure," he said. "It is time that a program is set up by the town to benefit these people and others."

At the conclusion of the talk, the Rotarians were given the opportunity of inspecting the renovated "great hall", many reminiscing about the entertainments they had attended there in past years, following which Mr. Jelleme escorted them to the main floor where the proposed changes in that section were explained by the speaker and the librarian.

Oct. 27, 1956

A Plea for the Atheneum.

Editors of the Inquirer and Mirror:
May I, through your columns, make an appeal for the Atheneum Library? The special interest is a department of music, to contain classical and other high-grade selections of vocal and instrumental numbers for the use and study of the occasional person with musical ambition.

A summer visitor recently asked if I had a copy of Handel's "Messiah". I found one in the attic, in a bundle with about 30 others. It was only then that the futility of their storage in the attic occurred to me.

Inquiry of Mrs. Smith, librarian, and Mr. Jelleme, Atheneum president, found a welcoming response for the library, so I located further: a quantity of grand opera librettos, comic opera scores (including Gilbert & Sullivan, and Victor Herbert and De Koven) and a few symphonies, sonatas, and other classics, which I have taken to the Atheneum.

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While I am quite without authority in the matter, I shall, on request, be happy to call for any material which may be offered.

Howard C. Barber
Nantucket, Mass.

July 28, 1956

Mrs. Gibbs Retires.

On Thursday afternoon the proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum Library accepted the resignation of Mrs. Herbert (Isabel) Gibbs as assistant librarian. Mrs. Gibbs has served the library and the people of Nantucket for the past 50 years with a loyalty, cheerfulness, and devotion to her duties seldom found in the modern world.

It was shortly after her graduation from Nantucket High School, in 1904, that Isabel Coffin entered the Nantucket Atheneum Library as a clerk. The following year she was made assistant librarian, a position which she has filled for forty-nine years.

During the half century which has passed Mrs. Gibbs has greeted thousands of Nantucketers, summer residents and visitors to the island from her position behind the desk in the library. Each one of these patrons of the library has received a cheerful smile, a hearty welcome, and gracious assistance. She has been absent from her duties only during her brief vacation periods or when sickness has made it impossible for her to go to work. Hundreds of Nantucket students have been grateful to her for her patient help in finding the books and periodicals needed for some phase of school work.

The friends Isabel Coffin Gibbs has made in the years she has been in the library number far into the thousands—some two or three thousand of them native Nantucketers. She will be greatly missed by each one of them, and we know they will all join us in expressing our thanks and appreciation to her for "services rendered" as well as wishing her happiness in the future.

May 7, 1955

Atheneum Circulated

26,518 Books In '56

Atheneum library had a total circulation of 26,518 books in 1956, reflecting an increase of 2947 books over that circulated in 1955, according to the annual report of Librarian Irene Jaynes Smith.

Mrs. Smith who became the Atheneum's librarian last April 1, succeeding the Acting librarian for the first three months of the year, Mrs. Cecilia White, said the institution has just completed another

Extensive renovations were completed in the reopened second floor hall and the first floor is now undergoing drastic restorations.

Miss Janice L. Williams was appointed assistant librarian at the first of the year, Mrs. Smith reported. Miss Williams attended Summer school for three weeks at the University of New Hampshire, continuing her studies in library science. Mrs. Laura F. Sylvia served as library assistant in her absence.

Mrs. Smith reported that of the 26,518 volumes circulated last year, 10,223 were borrowed by Summer residents and 16,295 by residents. Children borrowed a total of 4,999 books during the year.

Some 1382 membership cards—1201 to Summer residents and 181 to new year-round residents—were issued. Mrs. Smith said many Navy and Coast Guard personnel and their families have registered to use the library facilities and indicated the number doing so would increase.

The Atheneum added 927 books this year and half of these were children's books for which the need seemed most urgent, Mrs. Smith said. Many of the books were gifts. In addition, the Atheneum was given 1089 books and also many magazines.

"Many of these filled a real need, others could be used to replace wornout library copies, but there were also a great many duplicates and some books in poor condition that were not suitable for use in the library," according to the librarian's report. "All gifts have been accepted," she said "with the understanding that they will be put to the best possible use. Many duplicate volumes have been given to the Thrift Shop and some books and magazines which might be of interest to them have been given to the Coast Guard station."

To make room, the library discarded 5,394 books, many of them duplicates, out-of-date material and volumes in bad condition.

Mrs. Smith also reported that 140 books were ordered rebound but said cost of rebinding is so expensive that it seems advisable to rebind only books of real and lasting value.

The restoration of the upstairs "Great Hall", the librarian reported, was carried out in Spring and Summer and the new reading room opened on that floor was opened to the public Aug. 27. However, the late season opening and a defect in the heating system prevented the Hall from being used to any great extent, she said.

"Another year should witness much greater use," Mrs. Smith said. "Many persons have expressed pleasure in finding such a fine place to read and study."

Plans call for the book collection on the first floor to be used as a working collection in current use. Fiction, with few exceptions, will be kept on the first floor. Books for children and young adults will be in the special sections now under construction on the first floor. Also on the main floor there will be a work room, where the mending and preparing of books can be carried out, a staff room with a lavatory and coat closet and a walk-in fireproof vault, according to the librarian's report.

The "Great Hall" will hold books of more limited use, the genealogical collection, the library's large holdings in early travel and with these the publications of Hakluyt Society, volumes on early Quakerism, biography and history of interest to the reader with special needs. Bound newspaper files will be housed in a case being made by the Coffin School.

"The Atheneum has been a source of help and pleasure to the Island's people for many years," Mrs. Smith reported. "It is hoped that it will grow and expand its services, especially in the work with children. Plans for the future—which means as soon as construction ends and some sort of order is restored—include story hours for small children, classes in the use of the library's facilities for Junior and Senior High School pupils, and an attempt at closer cooperation with the Nantucket schools.

"There are endless opportunities for the extension of the library's service to the Island, if time, strength and, of course, money, permit. Believing in the power of books it is possible to see for the Proprietors of Atheneum a chance to enrich the cultural life of the community—a chance which offers at once a great opportunity and a challenge.

"It has been a great pleasure to work here, not alone for the beauty of the Island, but also for the friendliness and understanding that has been offered by the Island's people. Our thanks are extended to the Members of the Library Board who have put so much time and effort into this library endeavor."

Jan. 11, 1957

The Inquirer and Mirror

Increase in Shares Voted by Atheneum Proprietors.

At the postponed annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Atheneum, held at the library on January 16, an important step was taken which, it is hoped, will lead to a widening of the friends of the Atheneum, and to an increase in the institution's endowment funds.

This was accomplished by voting the following by-law:

The number of shares in this Institution shall be limited to 550. The value of all shares shall be fixed at \$50 a share, and redeemable at the option of the shareholder at \$50 a share by the Corporation. All unissued shares may be offered for sale by the Corporation at \$50 a share. The money received from the sale of these shares shall be placed in a separate account and invested, the purpose of which shall be the redemption of shares which may be offered by the shareholders and the increase of the Corporation's endowment income. Not more than one unissued share shall be sold to any one person. No proprietor shall be entitled to more than one vote."

Formerly the number of shares was limited to 275. However, as the Atheneum became a Free Library about

1900, many of the shareholders who, until that time, had exclusive use of the library gradually lost interest in its running and operation. This has resulted in the loss of a considerable number of shares so that today only a little over 100 Proprietors can be traced. Many of these now live off-island and are therefore unable to attend meetings.

With a fixed value of \$50 a share placed on all shares, it is hoped that the gradual loss of shares will be stopped. Also with additional shares offered for sale many friends, both year-round and summer residents, can take an active interest in the Atheneum.

Officers and Trustees were elected as follows:

President, Lewis B. Jelleme; Vice-President, Henry B. Coleman; Treasurer, Mrs. Victor R. Brown; Recording Secretary, Miss Marjorie Barrett; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Grace Brown Gardner. Trustees: Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Rev. Bradford Johnson, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Mrs. George MacDonald, Charles Gerald Snow, Leroy H. True, and Alcon Chadwick.

Reprinted from *The Inquirer and Mirror*, January 19, 1957

Atheneum To Up Shareholders To 550

A by-law change increasing its shareholders from 275 to 550 and authorizing purchase of old shares to generate more interest in the operation of the Atheneum was voted at the annual meeting of the proprietors of the Atheneum Library. Officers and trustees were elected at the session and reports were submitted.

Under the by-law change value of each share, issued and unissued, was fixed at \$50. Proceeds from the sale of shares, limited to one per person with one vote, will be invested to increase the corporation's endowment fund.

Although shareholders were formerly limited to 275, only slightly more than 100 can be traced today, many of them off-Island.

The proprietors said shareholders who formerly had exclusive use of the library "gradually lost interest in its running and operation" after the Atheneum became a free library in 1900. They contend "this has resulted in a loss of a considerable number of shares so that today only a little over 100 proprietors can be traced. Many of these now live off-Island and are therefore unable to attend meetings. With a fixed value of \$50 a share placed on all shares, it is hoped that the gradual loss of shares will be stopped. Also with additional shares offered for sale, many friends, both year-round and summer residents, can take an active interest in the Atheneum."

Officers and trustees elected at the session were: Lewis B. Jelleme, president; Henry B. Coleman, vice-president; Mrs. Victor R. Brown, treasurer; Miss Marjorie Barrett, recording secretary; Miss Grace Brown Gardner, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, the Rev. Bradford Johnson, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Mrs. George MacDonald, C. Gerald Snow, Leroy H. True and Alcon Chadwick, trustees.

Jan. 25, 1957

Library Funds Wanted

The Atheneum Library needs money. If certain anticipated expenses occur, the money for them must be taken from the book fund. With more means, the work of the Library could be made more effective in many ways. For instance:

More books and magazines could be bought.

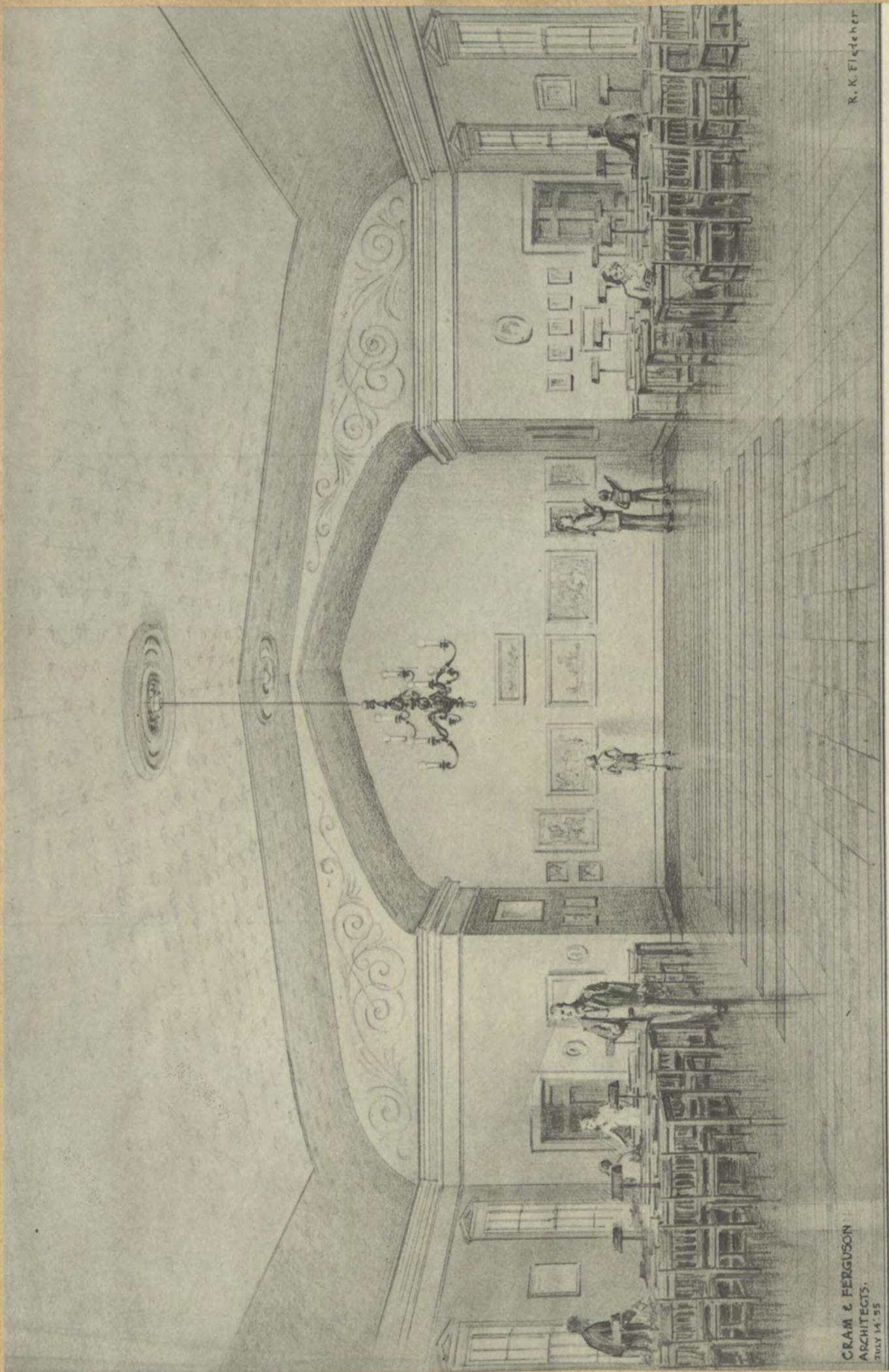
More magazines could be bound. The Library could be opened a larger part of the time.

More effort could be made to distribute books, by establishing Branch Libraries, or by sending small Traveling Libraries out of town, etc.

Therefore the trustees solicit Gifts and Bequests for the improvement of the Library, calling attention to the fact that it not only serves the community in winter, but aims to meet the demands made by a large and cultured summer population.

Donations or bequests may be forwarded to ALBERT G. BROCK, Treas.

Jan. 10, 1957



RESTORATION OF THE SECOND FLOOR
NANTUCKET ATHENEUM

CRAM & FERGUSON
ARCHITECTS,
JULY 14 55

Refurbishing of Atheneum At Nantucket Is Under Way

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, Oct. 26.—The Nantucket Rotary Club following its luncheon meeting in Legion Hall visited the Atheneum, the town library three blocks away.

Lewis B. Jelleme, president of the oldest free library in the Commonwealth, took his fellow Rotarians on a tour of the second-floor auditorium recently restored to the way it looked in 1847, when Ralph Waldo Emerson dedicated the then new building during a lecture series.

The Atheneum is the Rotary project for this year. Up to date \$25,000 has been raised, Mr. Jelleme said. A total of \$65,000 is needed to complete the plans which include a new lighting system, a reference and research room on the second floor, new book cases and separate reading rooms on the first floor for children, young adults and adults.

Building of Greek Design

The Atheneum is a beautiful wooden structure, of Greek classical design. Although it is privately endowed, it does serve as the town library. It is a favorite retreat for Summer visitors and during the school months the young adult section is crowded with students working on their lessons.

This library traces its history back to 1820 when the Mechanics Social Library was established. The original building was destroyed in the 1846 fire which virtually wiped out the business section of Nantucket. Immediately after the fire a meeting was called to rebuild. The present structure was completed within six months.

Up until the middle 1920s the second floor auditorium was a favorite place to hold suppers, lectures and concerts. Two men present yesterday, Harry Gordon and Henry B. Coleman, said they had vague recollections as children of being present in the hall with their elders during important social functions.

Between the time the Atheneum was incorporated in 1834 until Jan. 1956, 123 years, only three librarians have served Nantucket. The third librarian, Miss Clara Parker, retired this year. In April Mrs. Raymond Smith was appointed to replace Miss Parker.

The auditorium previously never has been used as part of the library. Today there are several rows of 8-foot high metal book shelves aligned across the room which could seat 400-500 persons. The high-ceilings room has been a collecting place for odds and ends for the past 30 years, including dust and cobwebs.

But yesterday the Rotarians entered a clean freshly-painted room, with a new indirect lighting system installed around the coping ledge. The original color shades were used. The walls are yellow. The coping is painted in strips of blue, pink, green and purple running around the top of the walls. The original scrolls in black filigree design can be seen.

During tour of the first floor library proper, Mr. Jelleme lifted up a gas lighter device, about 4 feet long and slightly curved, which is still hanging near the front door. It was hung there to light the gas globe which formerly hung over the entrance. Today the building is lighted with electricity.

Other Work Planned

"Sometime soon, this building will have to be rewired and a sprinkler system installed," Jelleme said. Eventually some partitions will be removed on the first floor and an open-stack book storage system installed.

On Monday workmen will start on some of the partition remodeling. Eventually most of the books will be stored on the second floor. In addition to the remodeling, which will be started this Winter, the library needs a walk-in fire-proof vault, plus the already mentioned sprinkler system and an electric book lift to the second floor.

Mrs. Raymond P. Smith Given Library Post.

The Trustees of the Nantucket Atheneum are pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs. Raymond P. Smith as Librarian. She will start her work the beginning of April.

Mrs. Smith is an administrator of experience and background. After college she served as reference assistant in the Springfield City Library, and then as reference Librarian in the Hartford Public Library. Since 1944 Mrs. Smith has been Librarian of the Ames Free Library in North Easton, Mass. In that time the book circulation has much more than doubled to the impressive figure of approximately 10 per capita. During the last few years Mrs. Smith has also served as president of the Regional Library Club in her area.

When Miss Clara Parker retired in January this year, the Atheneum was fortunate that Mrs. Warner G. White was available as interim Librarian. She has done excellent work, and that in the middle of the construction going on for the Library's preservation and improvement program.

Lewis B. Jelleme, President
Board of Trustees

200 Persons Visited Atheneum For "Great Hall" Opening.

A preview of the newly renovated "Great Hall" of the Nantucket Atheneum was held Sunday afternoon from 4 to 6 p.m., and approximately 200 persons took advantage of the opportunity to inspect the hall before it was opened to the public officially Monday morning.

The hall, once the main entertainment hall in Nantucket, is located on the second floor of the Atheneum building and will be used as a research reading room. The renovation was undertaken as part of the restoration project which is being carried on at the present time in order to improve and expand the facilities of the Atheneum Library.

The walls of the second floor are painted a cheerful yellow, "Imperial Gold", with a multicolored trim above which conceals the indirect lighting. Reflected down from the ceiling, the lighting is soft, but displays the features of the large room to the best advantage.

At the north end of the "Great Hall" is found the original small stage and lectern from which famed speakers addressed Nantucket audiences in years gone by. Once covered by a stage which was later used for minstrel and musical entertainments, the lectern has been restored to its original simple beauty. Behind the stage a vivid red Chinese tapestry, estimated to be 150 years old, is effectively displayed. This tapestry was brought to Nantucket many years ago and is thought to have been taken in the looting which followed the Boxer Rebellion.

Around the walls of the room are displayed portraits and several large paintings of ships, as well as two large paintings of Chinese scenes, while high near the ceiling at the ends of the hall the original painted scrollwork has been restored to its original beauty.

The ceiling needed comparatively little work during the restoration, and the wallpaper covering, believed to date from the late 1800's, has been preserved by over-painting the design with a translucent white which permits the design to show through.

Entrance to the second floor hall is gained from a newly-constructed stairway leading from the main floor at the right of the librarian's desk. A second stairway, from the foyer of the building, is not being used at the present time and will eventually be closed off with a door due to fire regulations.

Contributions are still being accepted by the Atheneum Preservation and Improvement Fund, for despite the fact that the second floor work has been completed, much remains to be done to the main floor and the rest of the building.

The second floor of the Atheneum is open during the regular library hours, and it is hoped the public will make a point of visiting the building and inspecting the restoration.

Atheneum Proprietors Meet; Hear Dr. Haile.

In the Great Hall of the Atheneum on Monday evening there was a meeting of the Proprietors and their friends. Mr. Lewis Jelleme, president of the library, gave a report of the restoration of the building and of the work in progress. He showed some of the many paintings that are being brought back to their original beauty. The Atheneum will be \$2500 to \$3000 in debt when the work is finished. Money will be taken from the Endowment Fund with the hope that later contributions will restore this loan to the Fund.

Many of the people who were at the meeting had not seen the Atheneum after dark with the lights turned on, and they were enthusiastic over the changes: the indirect lighting shining on the freshly-painted walls, the books arranged in perfect order, and open spaces where there used to be dark corners. Nantucket can be proud of its library.

Doctor Pennington Haile of Dartmouth College spoke to the deeply interested audience about West Germany and East Germany, or the "Soviet Zone" as the West Germans call it. The important points of his lecture were that the hunger of Germany for union cannot be exaggerated. West Germany has made a fantastic recovery from the grim ruin of 1945. The people of that country will join the European Common Market that is now forming though the Russians will do everything short of war to prevent it. He said that it is vital that the United States support West Germany and a future union with the Soviet Zone.

Aug. 3, 1957

Atheneum Supplies Books To Lightship

Thanks to the Nantucket Atheneum, personnel stationed aboard the Nantucket and Cross Rip lightships found themselves more than adequately supplied with reading matter for off duty hours during the recent holiday season.

Boxes containing some 25 books apiece were sent to both lightships by the Atheneum staff, under the direction of Librarian Mrs. Raymond P. Smith. Adventure stories, western, war novels and mysteries comprised the bulk of the contributions.

Mrs. Smith said that the books were selected from among those contributed to the library after certain volumes had been set aside for the Atheneum itself and for the Hospital Thrift Shop.

In a letter expressing the gratitude of the Coast Guard personnel manning the lightships, Chief Boatswain's Mate Joseph Hamel said: "The men of the Cross Rip light vessel wish to thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in sending us the box of books. They had many pleasant moments reading them over the holidays."

Sept. 1, 1956

Mar. 31, 1956

Mar. 26, 1956

Atheneum Library Gives Perpetual Promise To Fill Needs Of The Island Community

Every generation has its own jargon, or dialect. The words which make this dialect are common, but together in such new and previously unrelated ways that it seems as if a new language has been created. Obviously, when a 20th-century male says "Dig that car" he does not mean to take a shovel and uproot it.

Sometimes the jargon of youth fades with maturity. Sometimes it forms the nucleus for a pattern of thinking 100 years in advance of its times. Sometimes it is so representative of the unexpressed wishes of the family of man that it becomes the strongest current in the mainstream of the age.

Some decades are labeled in history according to the most prevalent jargon. "The Gay Nineties," "The Roaring Twenties" stand out in our minds as typical labels of vigorous currents in American development. No one has yet dared supply one all-inclusive adjective to fit "The Thirties", those days so full on uncertainty, anxiety, and struggle to find lasting values.

Contemporary historians, surveying the modern scene at mid-century, might characterize the tempo of these times as one of search, of seeking, and of exploring intellectual frontiers. Where Davy Crockett and Wyatt Earp, in frontier clothes and with six-shooters symbolize adventure to the six-year old, it is the scientist in the white jacket with test tube or slide rule that captures the imagination of the 16-year old, and the scholar with no tools but words and ideas that is the vision for the 60-year old.

Knowledge is the lode-star that beckons the searching imagination. A deepening awareness of the inter-relatedness of all branches of knowledge is the cement which binds new languages and new discoveries to the past.

A community that possesses a treasure house filled with records of the quests, accomplishments, and conquests of the past is rich. A community that possesses as well, a clearing house for contemporary information and thought serves the future.

In Nantucket, the Atheneum stands as a constant reminder of our cultural heritage and gives perpetual promise to the future by being responsive to the needs of the community.

During the 20-year span when Maria Mitchell, famed Nantucket astronomer served the Atheneum and Nantucket as the first Librarian, from 1836 to 1856, the library was the hub of cultural activities on the Island. Lectures given by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, William Ellery Channing, Louis Agassiz, and Herman Melville in the upstairs hall are now part of Nantucket's legend.

The Nantucket Philosophical Society, with Maria's father William Mitchell as president, the Social Reading Society where original stories and poems were read and discussed, the Sherburne Lyceum which debated a wide range of subjects, all met in the Atheneum. The spirit and energetic enthusiasm Islanders found in teasing each other's minds was encouraged by these meetings.

At that time, Miss Mitchell advised, regarding book purchases, that the Atheneum "buy not such books as people want, but books just above their wants and they will reach up to take what is put out for them."

The present librarian, the fifth in the Atheneum's history, Mrs. Raymond P. Smith, says that today the library has difficulty keeping abreast of the reading public. Many small libraries would have no need to stock books on foreign affairs, or to have a comprehensive philosophical section, she said, but with the scope of interest so broad on Nantucket, the Atheneum has more needs to fill.

Coming here two years ago as the Atheneum's first fulltime librarian, Mrs. Smith was undaunted by the remark of Everett U. Crosby, one of the library's proprietors. "You have 50 years work ahead of you," he said, but Mrs. Smith confidently sees a tapering off within two or three years of the seemingly endless cataloguing, inventorying, and weeding that must go on, if the library is to give its fullest service to the community.

"I marvel at the amount of work done by my predecessors," Mrs. Smith said. "We couldn't have accomplished so much in these two years without the volunteer help we've had."

Volunteer workers Mrs. Robert Condon, Mrs. Lewis Jelleme, Mrs. Charles Szkolas, and the Misses Jane and Julia Sullivan, have given incalculable time to revising the catalogue, Mrs. Smith said.

of current books are often bare, the staff includes three fulltime workers. In the Winter, Mrs. Smith and her part-time assistant, Miss Janice Williams, have the conscientious and careful help of Miss Julia Maulden.

Rainy days in the Summer find the shelves emptied and the chairs in the reading room filled, with the upstairs a haven of quiet for the overflow of readers.

Winter days often pose the same problem in space, Mrs. Smith said. Young people, especially high school students, crowd the library, to use its reference books and to have a place to study uninterrupted. Because the reading rooms are all open to each other, tighter restriction have to be imposed on the young people than would be necessary, if they had a room of their own, she continued.

"Many libraries today have children's sections in the basement, so the children won't disturb the adult readers. When young people are exuberant, they're not being bad, just natural," she continued.

"I'd like to think that sometime in the future the old bakery on the Atheneum's grounds that is now used for a real estate office might be converted to a children's library," she added. "It need be open only after school, and on Saturday mornings, but it would free the first floor of the Atheneum for more adult participation. This is just a dream now, but many times we wish for some place to put all the young people."

Lewis Jelleme, chairman of the board of trustees of the Atheneum, said that the possibility of developing the bakery building is remote at this time. "The initial funds needed to convert the building could possibly be raised," he said, "But the upkeep and staffing of the building would send budget skyrocketing. At present, it seems unlikely that the town would be willing to shoulder a sizable increase in our budget. Two-thirds of our budget comes from the town, and one-third from the Atheneum's endowment fund. All the funds we were able to secure over the last three years for the preservation and improvement of the Atheneum building itself have been used up. No money went into the endowment fund."

Admitting that space is a constant problem, Mr. Jelleme said that the aim of the proprietors is to build as well rounded a book collection as space and funds allow. Selection of books and the determination of which part of the collection should receive emphasis is left to the discretion of the librarian. Many members of the board express complete sympathy with Mrs. Smith's efforts and judgement in building up the children's section.

The circulation of children's and young people's books has almost doubled in two years. Young people use the library not only for reference, but also for reading recreation.

"People won't believe that young people read as much as they do, but books are in almost constant circulation," Mrs. Smith commented. "Many of the books have to be limited to one week's circulation, the demand is so great."

"Boys are particularly interested, in sports, aviation, and automobiles. They're more interested in skills than in reading biographies about athletes and mechanics. They're very down to earth and practical."

"So many good books are written for teen-age girls, and the girls love them. They learn how to meet different situations in life. The vicarious experience of a story's heroine in overcoming a handicap in background, personality, or physical make-up sometimes duplicates a situation in the girl's own life."

A large low table with small chairs has been added for preschool and primary children. Picture books and easy readers are attractively displayed on low shelves and on the table.

"Many children come in looking for the book that Miss Frances Darby has read to them in Playtime, or that some elementary teacher has shown them in class," Mrs. Smith said.

"The Atheneum is fortunate to receive so many gifts of books," Mrs. Smith said, "but gifts of children's books are not usual. We do have a Summer family that brings in a large box of children's books at the end of every Summer, books that their own children have read."

"Some families now give money gifts to the library for a memorial and we're grateful for the contributions. One of our most recent and most prized gifts is a collection of the American Heritage, and historical quarterly, given by Dr. Paul Cassebaum," Mrs. Smith added.

Biographies are the most popular reading in the non-fiction section, Mrs. Smith said, and far ahead of history and travel, although the interest and demand for books in these categories is growing.

"We try to have all types of fiction, to satisfy all types of readers," Mrs. Smith explained. "Since we are a public library, and use tax money, we try to fill everyone's needs as much as we can. For some shut-ins, reading is their only recreation. Light novels suit their taste, so we try to satisfy them."

In the poetry section, we've added some of the most basic volumes. T. S. Eliot, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, and Edwin Arlington Robinson, are ones we have to have. We add an occasional volume, but poetry reading is not so common as it was in the 20's," Mrs. Smith commented. "In an age of science that's to be expected, but we still have requests for poetry, and for plays."

adult life, Mrs. Smith typifies the sense of adventure and the detective spirit with which librarians must be endowed, if they are to answer the many questions that come their way. A reader, vexed by a passage from a book, a quotation, or a fact in history which remains fugitive to his memory, can count on Mrs. Smith's Sher-

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lock Holmes approach. Her blue eyes twinkle with the delight of discovering the half-forgotten or vaguely remembered item.

In answering the many needs a community makes of its library, Mrs. Smith, her assistants, and her predecessors, have succeeded in making the Atheneum the "University of the People."

By opening wider vistas to Isander's imaginations, by treasuring the enduring parts of our heritage, and by stretching the community's perspective with vicarious experiences, the Atheneum stands as a monument to the past, a welcome friend in the present, and a beacon for the future.

May 16, 1958

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An important and painstaking work is currently underway in the 'Sconset home of Mrs. Reginald Bragonier. Mrs. Bragonier is in charge of restoration work on the paintings in the collection of the Nantucket Atheneum. For the ten days preceding July 30th, she had the expert collaboration of Mrs. Janice Hines, of Alexandria, Virginia, specialist in the restoration of old oil paintings, who came to Nantucket from a recent assignment with the Blair House in Washington.

Mrs. Hines and Mrs. Bragonier worked together on one of the Library's Chinese paintings—a rare picture of the Houqua Gardens, brought to the Island by Captain Frederick Sanford.

Because the results from a good job of restoration often seem unbelievable, the popular imagination has credited the cleaner with ingredients resembling an alchemist's tray. But banana pealings and raw potato are not recommended. The real process, as Mrs. Hines and Mrs. Bragonier outlined it for us last Sunday, using the Chinese picture as an example, goes as follows:

First the painting needed relining. The delicate aged canvas on the back, too weak to support the weight of the paint, was cut away and a new stretcher of strong linen prepared. To this the old picture was attached with a solution of waxy formula. Then the front surface was carefully cleaned. (Sometimes each different color requires a different strength of the cleaning solution.) Holes or tears were filled—perhaps the most difficult step, since the weave of the color of the paint and the brushstroke of the artist must be perfectly duplicated. After a thin coat of picture varnish, the painting was ready for removal to its original stretcher, and when absolutely dry, for a rub-down with balsam oil. We saw the finished product on Sunday and can vouch for the efficiency of the system. Not a filled hole was visible and the paint sparkled like new.

Mrs. Bragonier compares the work of the restorer with that of the doctor, each damaged picture, like each patient, an entirely new case. Only time and the climate, the best materials and the greatest care can effect the "cure."

Into Mrs. Hines' studio in Alexandria have passed a fascinating assortment of "patients." There was a Velasquez, two Van Dyck matching portraits, and a golden painting done by Peruvian Indians in the age of the Conquistadors. The last-mentioned, which had been badly burned, required some astute detective work to determine the materials used. In cases like this Mrs. Hines calls in the Bureau of Standards and her "right hand," the Smithsonian. And there are the nameless paintings, punctured by bullets, umbrellas and brooms, and those already worked over by other "restorers," armed with zeal, misinformation and a bottle of floor varnish.

A member of the Alexandria Historical Association, Mrs. Hines has worked on pictures for exhibits there. The Cosmos Club in Washington, home of former Assistant Secretary of State Wells, has asked her to repair the murals and paintings in that collection. And she has recently completed a survey of the portraits of all former Secretaries of State, with a view to repairing these in the fall.

The Library's works do not look a bit incongruous in the Bragonier home. The house itself was transported 125 years ago from the center of town to its present location to serve as a "Chowder House" for its Starbuck owner. In the dooryard is a giant tree, "mother of all the sycamore-maples in 'Sconset," and here Mrs. Bragonier's mother planted the first climbing-rose, which started the style and eventually gave the village its "trademark."

Mrs. Bragonier is going ahead with her work, although the Atheneum has not as yet sufficient funds to cover the project. Any contributions to this necessary—and fascinating—work would, of course, be appreciated.

D. de B.

Aug. 3, 1958

Atheneum Restoration.

Editors of the Inquirer and Mirror:

Recently it was my good fortune to visit Nantucket for the first time, and I enjoyed it very much. Since the camera is my hobby much time was spent peering through the view finder at some of your beautiful old homes.

I was much impressed by your Atheneum, a beautiful building beautifully restored. In fact, Mr. Jelleme and the others responsible for this restoration are to be congratulated on their wonderful accomplishment.

With the restoration thus far along the next Atheneum items might well be a fire protection system and a walk-in fireproof vault. The latter could house the more valuable of your treasures. This should bring about an appreciable saving in your fire insurance costs. At least there would be peace of mind—no danger of the terrible fire loss which occurred in 1846.

This might be a worth while project for all of Nantucket to consider. The Atheneum holds a goodly share of the Nantucket heritage.

Sincerely yours,
James H. Bruce

Over 800 Books Contributed To Atheneum.

Summer visitors as well as Nantucket residents have been very generous in their gifts of books and periodicals to the Nantucket Atheneum this past year. More than 800 volumes have been sent in since the first of the year. Although all gifts are most welcome, some have been of such great importance to the library that they call for special notice.

In this group was a first edition of *Nimrod of the Sea; or, The American Whaler*, Harper, 1874, given to the Atheneum by Francis W. Davis of Hulbert Ave., who is the grandson of the author, William Morris Davis. This account of whaling in many parts of the world is listed in Crosby's *Nantucket in Print*.

A splendid gift which has been put to immediate use is a 20 volume set of the Colliers Encyclopedia. This was a gift from Mrs. L. R. Davey of Centre St. This encyclopedia is a recent publication which has received high praise from librarians and teachers.

The Atheneum was delighted to receive 15 issues of *American Heritage*, the magazine of history, sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History, and edited by Bruce Catton.

A collection of 41 modern children's books was contributed by Mr. and Mrs. H. Crowell Freeman. To the Freemans the Atheneum is indebted for other gifts of children's books that have helped immeasurably to build up the children's department.

Nantucket's many authors have presented autographed books that have been of special interest. Mrs. Isabel Boyd Proudfit of Lincoln Avenue gave the library a collection of her biographies for young people, each dedicated to the "Boys and Girls . . ." with an appropriate message. Mrs. Katharine Stanley-Brown added a copy of her "The Story of the Printed Word" to the library's books written by her. Mrs. Constance Buel Burnett presented the library with two of her splendid biographies, inscribed to the Atheneum.

A number of very beautiful, and much needed, books on art and allied subjects have come to the library from members of the Congdon family to create a nucleus for what will one day be the Anne Congdon Collection of Books on Art. Mrs. Congdon is a local artist of great ability.

Other collections for which the Atheneum is very grateful came from the following persons: James M. Andrews, Mrs. W. S. Archibald, Jr., Mrs. Tell Berna, Mrs. Cornelius Bond, Mrs. Frank Bryant, Alcon Chadwick, Mrs. Hibbert Conrad, Mrs. Donald Craig, Robert Deeley, Mrs. Burnham Dell, Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton, Mrs. William Elmslie, J. R. Fredland, Mrs. Raynor Gardiner, Mrs. Harry Guest, Miss Linda Lindstrom, Mrs. Merle T. Orléans, Mrs. Frances Page, Mrs. E. H. Perry, Mrs. Lucius Potter, Mrs. H. Prindiville, Robert Ritchie, Mrs. Ernest R. St. Jean, Mr. & Mrs. George H. Simonds, H. Dewitt Smith, Miss Marion Sprague, Mrs. Harriet Starbuck, Harmon Tupper, Mrs. William Weedon, Mrs. Carol Wieser and Miss Catherine Woolsey.

Atheneum Notes

On Friday, June 20, the Nantucket Atheneum began its summer schedule. The library is now open from 9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday it is open until 8:30 in the evening. Saturday the hours are 9:30 to 12:30 only. This schedule will remain in effect until September 20.

All residents, proprietors and property owners are issued a free library card. For those who are neither residents nor tax payers a subscription card, which costs \$2 a year, is available. This subscription card grants the holder all the rights and privileges of the library.

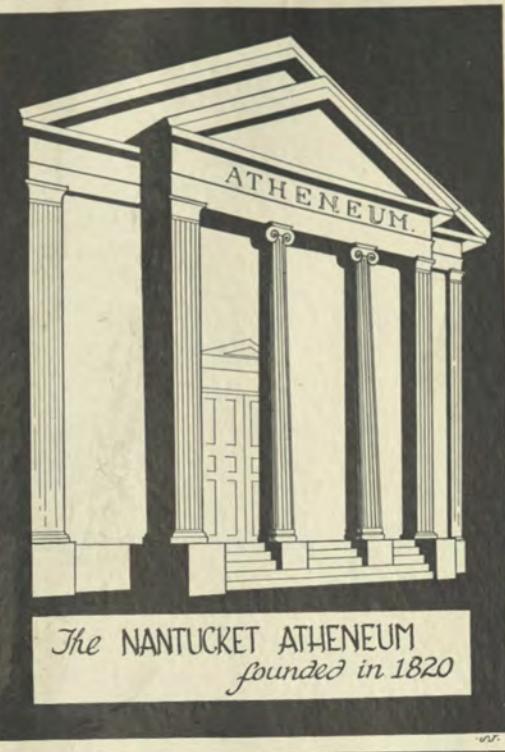
Many new books have been added to the library recently. Three new books on education have been included. They are, "Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools," by Woodring; "The Restoration of Learning" by Bestor, and "Bending the Twig," by Rudd.

Dr. Middlecoff's recent book, called "Advanced Golf," has just been added. Also in non-fiction three new books of history are important: "The Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson," by Herbert Hoover, "Dreamers of the American Dream," by Stewart Holbrook, and "The Island," by Robert Payne.

Among the new novels are: "Ice Palace," by Edna Furber; "The Revolutionary," by Schoonover; "Green-gage Summer," by Rumer Godden; "The Exile and the Kingdom," by Albert Camus; "Centenary of Jalna," by Maza de la Roche; "Jephtha and his Daughters," by Feuchtwanger; "Singing in the Shrouds," by Agatha Christie; "The Mountain Road," by White; "The Arlington Inheritance," by Patricia Wentworth; "A Note of Grace," by Singleton; "Northern Light," by Cronin, and "Giddy Moment" by Ernestine Gilbreth Carey.

Oct. 19, 1957

Sept. 21, 1957



NEW HAMPSHIRE
INSURANCE GROUP
MANCHESTER, N. H.
STOCK COMPANIES

The Atheneum Bookplate
Designed and given
to the Atheneum by
Sheila Barney Selleine
July 21, 1958

Atheneum at the present time is an estimated 2,945. A total of 1,018 registration cards were issued during the year. Of this number 173 were issued to year-round residents, and 845 issued to summer visitors, 288 of which were renewals. The rest of the summer cards, 562, were new registrations. This record is about 300 less than the previous year, undoubtedly because of a change in library policy. In the past, summer visitors who were not property owners were allowed to borrow books on the signature of two Nantucket persons, or a deposit of one dollar which was refunded when the card and books were

returned. This generous service was discontinued, with regret, when library officials considered the added costs of extra hours, extra help, increased lighting, and extra books needed to accommodate the more than triple demands of the summer people.

All proprietors, residents, and property owners are, of course, given free borrowing privileges. A nominal charge of two dollars a year is now required of all non-resident, non-taxpayers who wish to borrow library books and periodicals. This practice is followed by most of the libraries in the country. There were 304 subscription cards issued this summer. The drop in summer registration was probably due to the fact that, with a charge per card, families and groups managed with a single card instead of getting one card per person. The privilege of borrowing four books on a card at a time, which is a library rule, made this the practical thing to do.

There were 1,195 volumes added to the library during 1957. Of these 338 were adult fiction, 712 adult non-fiction, and 145 children's books.

As in the past many interested persons contributed books and periodicals to the library. Donations of books amounted to 1,027 volumes.

Two practices put into effect this summer were met with much success. One was the issuing of new and very popular books for only seven days at a time. The books moved along much faster with this limit in time.

For the other innovation thanks must be extended to Morris Ernst. Mr. Ernst sent the library a large collection of paper-back books in subjects that would interest the advanced reader and scholar. These seemed to fill a real need. They expanded our subject matter into fields not approached by the small library, and also were light (in weight) and easy to carry in pocket and purse. It would seem advisable to add to this collection and extend our resources at a small cost.

Through the generosity of Mrs. Raynor Gardiner a new 60-drawer card catalog was purchased this year. This will be of great value when the revision of the catalog, now in progress, is completed. It is also a beautiful piece of library furniture. This revision, now the number one project on which all effort is being expended, includes the taking of an inventory of the library's books and the revision of the card catalog. This work will extend over quite a period of time.

Gifts of filing cabinets from Miss Cora Stevens and Henry B. Coleman were welcomed to accommodate the library's growing pamphlet file and picture collection.

One of the bad things about redecorating a home—and this also applies to a library—is that the new paint and varnish show up the other things that need renewing as well. For example, the first floor needs new tables very badly, table lamps are wanted for the Great Hall, and there are other things.

The greatest needs, however, are for more extended cataloguing, and other means by which the library's facilities may be made more easily available. Until this is at least partly accomplished plans for the extension of the library's services will be closed down.

A good library in a community is a valuable asset, especially in these times. As far back as 1942 when Wendell Willkie visited Russia he reported finding the libraries crowded with people, all eagerly reading, studying. Americans are finding that they must read and study as well. The Trustees and the librarians are aware of a need for good library service on the island and are doing all they can to promote it.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the many persons who have recognized this need as we do and have helped in so many ways toward building the Atheneum into a useful center of information, as well as a thing of beauty.

This takes time and money, of course, but the building goes forward much faster with the enthusiasm of those about us. For the kind words and enthusiasm of the Proprietors and the friends of the Atheneum both "on and off," we offer our grateful thanks.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Jaynes Smith,
Librarian

Jan. 18, 1958

Atheneum Proprietors Meet; Hear Dr. Haile.

In the Great Hall of the Atheneum on Monday evening there was a meeting of the Proprietors and their friends. Mr. Lewis Jelleme, president of the library, gave a report of the restoration of the building and of the work in progress. He showed some of the many paintings that are being brought back to their original beauty. The Atheneum will be \$2500 to \$3000 in debt when the work is finished. Money will be taken from the Endowment Fund with the hope that later contributions will restore this loan to the Fund.

Many of the people who were at the meeting had not seen the Atheneum after dark with the lights turned on, and they were enthusiastic over the changes: the indirect lighting shining on the freshly-painted walls, the books arranged in perfect order, and open spaces where there used to be dark corners. Nantucket can be proud of its library.

Doctor Pennington Haile of Dartmouth College spoke to the deeply interested audience about West Germany and East Germany, or the "Soviet Zone" as the West Germans call it. The important points of his lecture were that the hunger of Germany for union cannot be exaggerated. West Germany has made a fantastic recovery from the grim ruin of 1945. The people of that country will join the European Common Market that is now forming though the Russians will do everything short of war to prevent it. He said that it is vital that the United States support West Germany and a future union with the Soviet Zone.

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Nantucket's many authors have presented autographed books that have been of special interest. Mrs. Isabel Boyd Proudfit of Lincoln Avenue gave the library a collection of her biographies for young people, each dedicated to the "Boys and Girls . . . with an appropriate message. Miss Katharine Stanley-Brown added a copy of her "The Story of the Printed Word" to the library's books written by her. Mrs. Constance Buel Burnham presented the library with two of her splendid biographies, inscribed by the Atheneum.

A number of very beautiful, and much needed, books on art and allied subjects have come to the library from members of the Congdon family to create a nucleus for what will one day be the Anne Congdon Collection of Books on Art. Mrs. Congdon is a local artist of great ability.

Other collections for which the Atheneum is very grateful came from the following persons: James M. Andrews, Mrs. W. S. Archibald, Jr., Mrs. Tell Berna, Mrs. Cornelius Bond, Mrs. Frank Bryant, Alcon Chadwick, Mrs. Hibbert Conrad, Mrs. Donald Craig, Robert Deeley, Mrs. Burnham Dell, Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton, Mrs. William Elmslie, J. R. Fredland, Mrs. Raynor Gardiner, Mrs. Harry Guest, Miss Linda Lindstrom, Mrs. Merle T. Orléans, Mrs. Frances Page, Mrs. E. H. Perry, Mrs. Lucius Potter, Mrs. H. Prindiville, Robert Ritchie, Mrs. Ernest R. St. Jean, Mr. & Mrs. George H. Simonds, H. Dewitt Smith, Miss Marion Sprague, Mrs. Harriet Starbuck, Harmon Tupper, Mrs. William Weedon, Mrs. Carol Wieser and Miss Catherine Woolsey.

Atheneum Notes

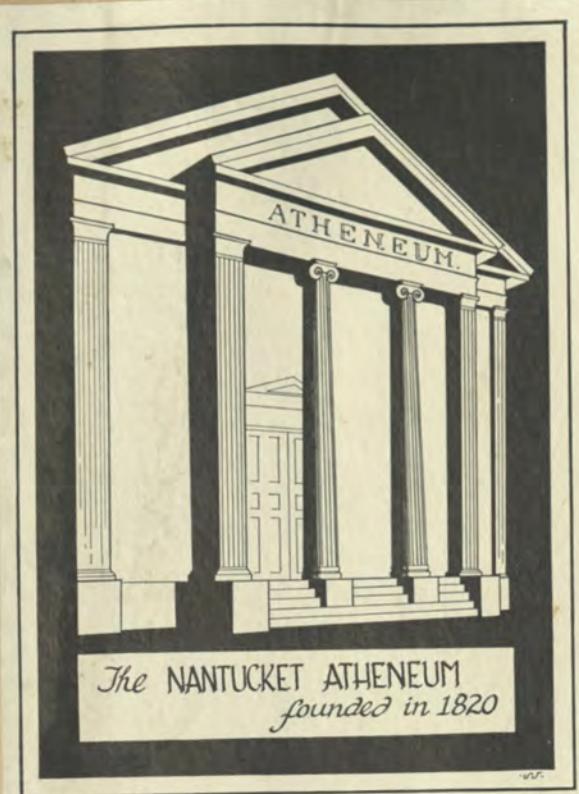
On Friday, June 20, the Nantucket Atheneum began its summer schedule. The library is now open from 9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday it is open until 8:30 in the evening. Saturday the hours are 9:30 to 12:30 only. This schedule will remain in effect until September 20.

All residents, proprietors and property owners are issued a free library card. For those who are neither residents nor tax payers a subscription card, which costs \$2 a year, is available. This subscription card grants the holder all the rights and privileges of the library.

Many new books have been added.

Oct. 19, 1957

Sept. 21, 1957



Substantial Circulation Gains Reported by Librarian.

Report of the Librarian of the Nantucket Atheneum:

The year 1957 saw the renovation of the first floor of the Atheneum, the painting of the exterior, new lighting inside and out, and landscaping of the library grounds. This last was the work and gift of the Garden Club, and is a joy not only to the library and its patrons but to all who pass by. It is a pleasure to hear the comments of persons seeing the Atheneum for the first time since its restoration. The remark most often heard is: "How beautiful the library looks! Just like a wedding cake!" People seem to be pleased also with the interior and always speak of the new roominess and the added light.

In spite of the noise and confusion of the first six months of the year, while carpenters, masons, electricians, and painters carried on their work, the library's record of book circulation shows substantial gains. Total circulation for the year was 31,030 volumes, a gain of 4,522 over the previous year. About half of this increase was in children's books. Children borrowed 6,433 volumes during the year. This record is confined largely to books for young children, as the high school students use the adult collection in their last two or three years.

Fiction, which always leads the score, was borrowed 17,263 times. In adult non-fiction the largest circulation was in biography, with history and literature following.

The number of card holders in the Atheneum at the present time is an estimated 2,945. A total of 1,018 registration cards were issued during the year. Of this number 173 were issued to year-round residents, and 845 issued to summer visitors, 283 of which were renewals. The rest of the summer cards, 562, were new registrations. This record is about 300 less than the previous year, undoubtedly because of a change in library policy. In the past, summer visitors who were not property owners were allowed to borrow books on the signature of two Nantucket persons, or a deposit of one dollar which was refunded when the card and books were

returned. This generous service was discontinued, with regret, when library officials considered the added costs of extra hours, extra help, increased lighting, and extra books needed to accommodate the more than triple demands of the summer people.

All proprietors, residents, and property owners are, of course, given free borrowing privileges. A nominal charge of two dollars a year is now required of all non-resident, non-taxpayers who wish to borrow library books and periodicals. This practice is followed by most of the libraries in the country. There were 304 subscription cards issued this summer. The drop in summer registration was probably due to the fact that, with a charge per card, families and groups managed with a single card instead of getting one card per person. The privilege of borrowing four books on a card at a time, which is a library rule, made this the practical thing to do.

There were 1,195 volumes added to the library during 1957. Of these 338 were adult fiction, 712 adult non-fiction, and 145 children's books.

As in the past many interested persons contributed books and periodicals to the library. Donations of books amounted to 1,027 volumes.

Two practices put into effect this summer were met with much success. One was the issuing of new and very popular books for only seven days at a time. The books moved along much faster with this limit in time.

For the other innovation thanks must be extended to Morris Ernst. Mr. Ernst sent the library a large collection of paper-back books in subjects that would interest the advanced reader and scholar. These seemed to fill a real need. They expanded our subject matter into fields not approached by the small library, and also were light (in weight) and easy to carry in pocket and purse. It would seem advisable to add to this collection and extend our resources at a small cost.

Through the generosity of Mrs. Raynor Gardiner a new 60-drawer card catalog was purchased this year. This will be of great value when the revision of the catalog, now in progress, is completed. It is also a beautiful piece of library furniture. This revision, now the number one project on which all effort is being expended, includes the taking of an inventory of the library's books and the revision of the card catalog. This work will extend over quite a period of time.

Gifts of filing cabinets from Miss Cora Stevens and Henry B. Coleman were welcomed to accommodate the library's growing pamphlet file and picture collection.

One of the bad things about redecorating a home—and this also applies to a library—is that the new paint and varnish show up the other things that need renewing as well. For example, the first floor needs new tables very badly, table lamps are wanted for the Great Hall, and there are other things.

The greatest needs, however, are for more extended cataloguing, and other means by which the library's facilities may be made more easily available. Until this is at least partly accomplished plans for the extension of the library's services will be closed down.

A good library in a community is a valuable asset, especially in these times. As far back as 1942 when Wendell Willkie visited Russia he reported finding the libraries crowded with people, all eagerly reading, studying. Americans are finding that they must read and study as well. The Trustees and the librarians are aware of a need for good library service on the island and are doing all they can to promote it.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the many persons who have recognized this need as we do and have helped in so many ways toward building the Atheneum into a useful center of information, as well as a thing of beauty.

This takes time and money, of course, but the building goes forward much faster with the enthusiasm of those about us. For the kind words and enthusiasm of the Proprietors and the friends of the Atheneum both "on and off," we offer our grateful thanks.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Jaynes Smith,
Librarian

307.18, 1958

Atheneum Proprietors Meet; Hear Dr. Haile.

In the Great Hall of the Atheneum on Monday evening there was a meeting of the Proprietors and their friends. Mr. Lewis Jelleme, president of the library, gave a report of the restoration of the building and of the work in progress. He showed some of the many paintings that are being brought back to their original beauty. The Atheneum will be \$2500 to \$3000 in debt when the work is finished. Money will be taken from the Endowment Fund with the hope that later contributions will restore this loan to the Fund.

Many of the people who were at the meeting had not seen the Atheneum after dark with the lights turned on, and they were enthusiastic over the changes: the indirect lighting shining on the freshly-painted walls, the books arranged in perfect order, and open spaces where there used to be dark corners. Nantucket can be proud of its library.

Doctor Pennington Haile of Dartmouth College spoke to the deeply interested audience about West Germany and East Germany, or the "Soviet Zone" as the West Germans call it. The important points of his lecture were that the hunger of Germany for union cannot be exaggerated. West Germany has made a fantastic recovery from the grim ruin of 1945. The people of that country will join the European Common Market that is now forming though the Russians will do everything short of war to prevent it. He said that it is vital that the United States support West Germany and a future union with the Soviet Zone.

Library Rejects Car Parking Area Proposal By Board

A proposal of Selectmen urging the Atheneum Library grounds for a car parking area met with stiff opposition not only from trustees of the institution but also from officials of the Nantucket Historical Association and the board of directors of the Pacific National Bank, according to letters received at the meeting of the Board Wednesday night.

The library trustees wrote the Board that the proposal was not in the best interests of the town and disclosed their plans to turn the area into a small park eventually.

At the same time, the trustees said they plan to remove from the grounds a building formerly rented to Mr. and Mrs. Chester Williams at India and South Water Streets as a candy kitchen. Mr. and Mrs. Williams are now maintenance man and cook at Our Island Home. Their former candy kitchen has been cleared of equipment recently.

Dr. Frank E. Lewis, president of the Pacific National Bank, said the bank's directors had voted themselves unanimously opposed to the conversion of the library grounds for a car parking area. It would detract from the prestige of the historical Atheneum, the letter said, if the proposal were carried out.

Adding their voice to the protest were officials of the Nantucket Historical Association.

Members of the Board said they were agreeably surprised at the idea the library grounds would be converted into a park instead and wondered why the plans had not been announced before.

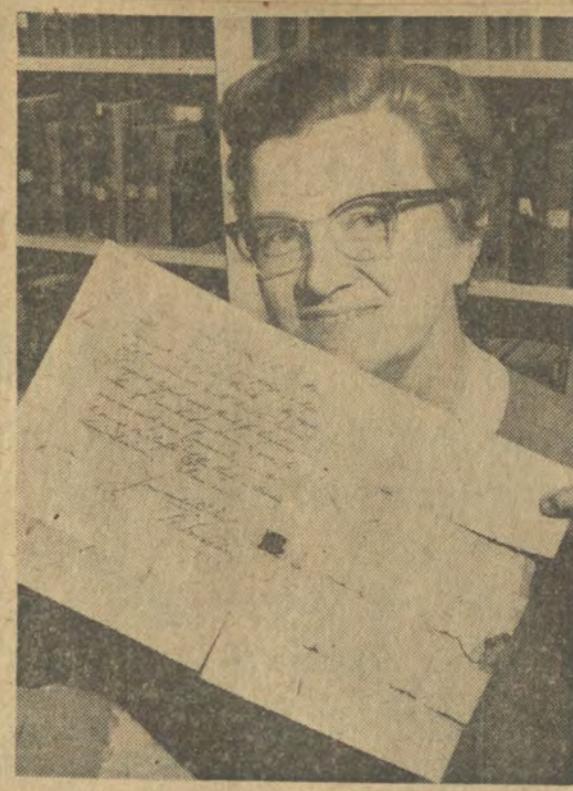
Selectman Walter S. Barrett, nevertheless, said it was not as though the Board had asked the library, privately owned but supported partially with a town appropriation, to provide all the grounds for parking area.

"It was only a small piece we asked for," he said.

Chairman Kenneth N. Pease said the downtown parking area would be eased when the First National Stores moves from Main Street to a supermarket at Lower Pleasant Street and Sparks Avenue which it plans to construct next Fall.

Secretary James K. Glidden said some towns have village greens and thought it would be a good idea if the Atheneum grounds could be made into one. He said he was willing to forego the idea of a parking area if the library carries out the park proposal.

He proposed the Board offer its cooperation to the Library in advancing the date for realization of the park plan and urged the Tree Commission might be useful, too, in connection with a tree planting program on the Atheneum grounds.



A BEN FRANKLIN LETTER is one of the rare historical documents that will be on display at Nantucket Atheneum, during the anniversary celebration; holding it is Mrs. Irene J. Smith, the librarian.

Atheneum Proprietors Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum was held at the Library Thursday evening, January 8, with an attendance of about 20 members. The reports of the secretary, treasurer, and librarian were approved as read and the election of officers and trustees for the ensuing year was held.

The officers, who were all re-elected, are Mr. Lewis B. Jelleme, president; Mr. Henry B. Coleman, vice-president; Miss Marjorie Barrett, recording secretary; Miss Grace Brown Gardner, corresponding secretary, and Mrs. Victor Brown, treasurer. Trustees for the year 1959, who were also all re-elected for the year, are Henry C. Carlisle, Alcon Chadwick, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Mrs. Raynor M. Gardner, Rev. Bradford Johnson, Mrs. Paul Klingelfuss, Mrs. George MacDonald, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Charles G. Snow, Miss Cora Stevens, and Leroy H. True.

Increased Circulation Noted In Atheneum Annual Report

Increased circulation, especially of children's books, the completion of an inventory, and a near-completion of the catalog revision are the high points of achievement at the Atheneum during 1958.

Circulation totals of 34,447 volumes for the year represents a gain of well over 4,000 over the previous year's record, although no appreciable gains have been noted in other libraries. The big gain was in the circulation of children's books. Two years ago during the remodeling of the library, special sections were provided for school pupils and very small children. In that short period the circulation of children's books has doubled. Last year 8,262 books were loaned to young readers.

The next gain was in adult non-fiction which showed an increase of more than 1,200 volumes. Non-residents borrowed a total of 10,598 volumes during the year. It is interesting to note that this is less than one-third of the total circulation, although non-resident cards were in use for every month except January through April and constitute approximately one-half of the total number of cards issued.

After two years of work the inventory reached completion this year. This is the first inventory of the library's books that has been taken for many years. Revision of the card catalog which was undertaken along with the inventory is well on its way to completion. At the present time subject cards are being made, following the subject headings approved by "Sears List of Subject Headings," Seventh Edition. More than 1,000 subject cards have been made, and nearly 10 times that number will be needed to furnish an adequate guide to the library's resources.

The Atheneum greatly appreciates the assistance given by volunteers in this cataloguing project. During the spring and fall months the following ladies reported for work on Wednesday mornings: Mrs. Lewis B. Jelleme, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Mrs. Charles Szkla, Miss Jane and Miss Julia Sullivan, and Miss Eleanor Wilby. They helped in the typing, filing, and arranging of cards as well as in other valuable projects.

Gifts arrived in bountiful fashion this past year: 1,061 volumes of miscellaneous literature were received as well as many pamphlets and magazines. A special collection presented to the library was the Everett U. Crosby Collection of books on modern art. This, with the Austin Strong Collection of books on ships and the sea, given the previous year by Mrs. Strong, and the Sanford Library of books remarkable for illustrations and binding, present a problem in housing. In order to display these collections, glass enclosed cases are needed badly. Such cases and a more adequate vault for valuable books and papers are current needs.

There were 1,063 new registrations during the year, 895 summer visitors and 168 year-round residents. Subscription cards were issued to 297 persons.

New books added to the library totaled 902 volumes, of which 352 were adult fiction, 353 adult non-fiction, and 197 juvenile. An effort has been made to add library books that will interest all types of readers, as well as to round out the subject collections. Books were borrowed from libraries on the mainland through the State Division of Library Extension, in cases where special material was needed.

A column featuring Atheneum news and lists of new books now appears once a month in *The Inquirer and Mirror*. This seems to meet with the approval of the library's borrowers judging by requests for reserves on books noted in the column.

The librarians are making every effort to present to the tercentenary visitors a modern and efficient library, equipped to meet today's needs, but set in a beautiful building created 112 years ago—now remodeled to preserve and display its finest features.

It is our hope and aim that the Atheneum will contribute as much in service to the Island as it does in beauty.

Irene Jaynes Smith
Librarian

Jan. 16, 1959

Library Plans Book Service For Shut-Ins

Acting in conjunction with the Senior Girl Scouts, who have adopted the plan as a part of their community service program, the Nantucket Atheneum has inaugurated a new lending service by which books will be made available to invalids or others unable to come to the library themselves.

Mrs. Raymond P. Smith, librarian, has announced that the Girl Scouts will pick up books at the Atheneum and deliver them to those desiring them, or return books to the library from homes of readers who are confined because of illness.

Those unable to get to the library may make arrangements to borrow or return books by telephoning the Atheneum (1110). Librarians will select the books desired by the readers and the Scouts will bring them to their homes.

"This project should be a great help to the many families confined to their homes because of illness," Mrs. Smith said. "It is to be hoped that Nantucket people will avail themselves of this service."

Senior Girl Scouts now working on the project under the direction of Scout Leader Miss Janet True are Judy Brock and Barbara Wilson.

Feb. 19, 1960

JUNE 12, 1959

Atheneum Facilities
Record 26,847 Books

In Greater Use; 9107
Circulated In '59

A marked increase in the use of the facilities of the Nantucket Atheneum by year-round Island residents highlighted the annual report presented to officers and proprietors of the local library last night by Mrs. Raymond P. Smith, librarian.

In making her report, Mrs. Smith outlined the history and development of the Atheneum and pointed out that "the greatest increase in the use of the library at the present time comes from Nantucket residents."

"Of a gain in circulation of 2400 volumes for this past year over 1958," her report emphasizes, "2187 was in the use of library books by year-round residents."

Mrs. Smith prefaced her report by saying "the Nantucket Atheneum has reached definite milestones: This year we begin the library's 140th year; and we have just completed 60 years of service to the community."

"Four years ago, another high point was reached when, with a program of 'Preservation and Improvement,' the library turned the corner from the quaint and interesting to the beautiful and useful."

"In 1820," the report continued, "the Atheneum was founded with a book collection of 23 volumes which grew to 3200 volumes, all lost in the fire (The Great Fire of 1846). The new start in 1847 was with 1600 volumes and today there are more than 40,000 books in the library."

For purposes of comparison, Mrs. Smith's report explained that "in the year 1900, the first year that the library was opened to the public, 19,186 books were borrowed. In 1959, the circulation record was 36,847. The number of persons using the library has increased in equal measure from 1312 in 1900 to 3085 in 1959."

Discussing the library's present place in the community, the report continued: "The Atheneum has a difficult role to play. In a way, we attempt to be all things to all people."

"In the Summer, our services are requested by borrowers from 38 states as well as Canada, England and occasionally other foreign countries. Their interests and tastes range from those of New Yorkers to San Franciscans, Bostonians to Nantucketers."

"In the Summer, the latest novel and the newest trend in literature are desired. At the same time, the peace and quiet of the Island arouse a renewed interest in the books of the past—St. Elmo, The Shepherd of the Hills, Rupert of Hentzau, Phineas Finn, to mention a few."

"In the Winter," the librarian pointed out, "we attempt to satisfy the need of students as well as to answer the requests for information from a growing community, augmented by increasing numbers of retired persons of more than average intellectual capacity."

"In order to accomplish our purpose on the Island, the Nantucket Atheneum has a three-fold program.

"First, and placed first because of the number of calls of this type, comes increased service in reading for recreation. This includes recreational reading for the Summer visitors and for many residents, older Nantucket citizens to whom reading as recreation is more inviting than swimming or cycling.

"We have tried to provide the latest and best in current literature as far as our limited funds will allow. To help the many readers who prefer to come to the library in the morning, the Atheneum is now open on Wednesday as well as Saturday mornings.

"Second, to serve as a clearing house for information in the community, the Atheneum has added many new books of reference. A large number of these have been acquired through gifts, presented in memory of sons, daughters and friends of Nantucket and inscribed in their names.

"Many more reference tools must be provided to furnish answers to today's questions," the report declares. "Unfortunately, books of 25 years ago, and less in some cases, are not adequate for present needs."

"In science, the library is ably served by the Maria Mitchell Scientific Library. In the social sciences and in philosophy, history, biography and even in literary criticism, the new approach to the subject is required by students. Costly as they are, the new editions and revisions of standard reference works in these fields should be available if good service is to be given."

"Third, and of prime importance, is the library's place in Nantucket's educational system. In work with the schools, the Atheneum has this year taken a step forward. We have held classes for junior and senior year High School students, explaining the use of the newly revised card catalogue, the Dewey decimal classification and the use of books and reference tools.

"We have maintained shelves of books for pupils with special needs and provided supplementary reading for school students of all grades. For the benefit of students who work or who participate in any of the sports, the Atheneum is now open on Monday evenings from 7-9. School pupils may now use the library after school every day, and on Monday evening and Saturday morning. Here again, in our work with the schools, a need is apparent for more and newer books on all subjects."

"No part of the library's program," Mrs. Smith's report concludes, "could be advanced without the help in money, time and counsel of the Atheneum's many friends. We are grateful to all those who appreciate Nantucket's cultural heritage and extend aid to the Atheneum in our attempt to do our share to keep this heritage alive."

Meanwhile, Lewis B. Jelleme, president of the Proprietors of the Atheneum, submitted an appropriation request of \$9600 to the Finance Committee. The \$9600, he explained, was identical with last year's budget figure and represented salary expenditures not covered by the Atheneum's endowment fund, which meets all other expenditures.

Mr. Jelleme later said that some 60 shares, valued at \$50 each, are available to prospective shareholders. "Nobody really knows how many shareholders there are," he said, "because some have been lost and others have been handed on to heirs who can't be located."

"We were originally authorized to issue 250 shares, but recently we authorized the issuance of 250 more, some of which have since been sold. It isn't a money-making proposition or investment," he emphasized, "but anyone buying a share is assured of getting his money back if he leaves the Island or wants to get out. The money is put in a special fund and all we use is the interest. You might say it's an intellectual investment."

Jan. 15, 1960

Jelleme Re-elected President
At Atheneum Meeting

The annual meeting of the Proprietors of the Nantucket Atheneum was held at the Library Thursday evening with 21 proprietors in attendance.

Mrs. Irene J. Smith, librarian, presented her report for the year, an excellently prepared and most interesting account of the work carried on at the library. Her report will be found elsewhere in this issue of The Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Leroy True, chairman of the building committee, spoke briefly of the work currently being carried on. This includes the planting already done by the Nantucket Garden Club at the southeast corner of the Atheneum property where the Nantucket Candy Kitchen building formerly stood, plans for the removal of the little building presently occupied by Miss Gladys Wood's Real Estate office with the preservation of the old ovens contained therein, and subsequent landscaping of the rest of the property. Mr. C. Gerald Snow, also of the building committee, gave a brief report on the work being done with regard to the heating problem within the Library building itself.

The nominating committee, of which Mr. Snow was chairman, presented its report, which was accepted, with a vote being passed to close nominations for officers. The secretary was instructed to cast one vote for the election of officers, who, with one exception, were all re-elected to their present positions. The one exception was the election of Mrs. Francis W. Davis, of Belmont and Nantucket, as a new member of the Board of Trustees. The officers who were re-elected are Lewis B. Jelleme, president; Henry B. Coleman, vice-president; Mrs. Victor Brown, treasurer; Miss Marjorie Barrett, recording secretary; Miss Grace Brown Gardner, corresponding secretary; trustees, Miss Cora Stevens, Mrs. Robert D. Congdon, Rev. Bradford Johnson, Alcon Chadwick, Dr. Ernest H. Menges, Mrs. George MacDonald, Leroy H. True, Henry C. Carlisle, Mrs. Paul Klingelfuss, and Charles Gerald Snow.

Before the meeting adjourned, Mr. Jelleme made a brief speech in which he paid tribute to the late Mrs. Raynor M. Gardiner, a member of the Board of Trustees, whose interest in and devotion of the work of the library has been greatly missed.

Mar. 15, 1960

**The Nantucket Atheneum
Librarian's Report**

To characterize the year 1960 at the Atheneum briefly can be best done with the words "a year of promise." No major changes were made in the building — but there is promise of new arrangements in the Great Hall. The use of the library, both for reference and the borrowing of books, showed an increase — and evidences of increased interest and appreciation of the Atheneum were very apparent. Donations of money and books showed a concern for the advancement of the library's facilities. Praise from newcomers to the Island were heard often and seemed genuine and enthusiastic. It was, in all, a good year.

The circulation of books showed an increase of nearly 3,000 over the previous year — a total gain of 12,490 during the last five years. Children's book circulation was more than double the record of five years ago. Book circulation in Nantucket is influenced by many things, but principally by weather and the changing numbers of the tourist population, July this year showed a decrease — the boat strike — but August produced a large increase. Any month having bad weather will show losses in the library's circulation. This may be due to the large numbers of retired senior citizens who use the library regularly, but who are kept indoors during stormy weather. Rainy days during the summer create crowded conditions in the library, but that does not affect the circulation to any great extent. There were small gains in resident circulation records, non-resident records, and juvenile circulation, the largest gain of the three appearing in non-resident.

In registration the total remained close to last year's figures: 1,147 persons registered in 1960, and 1,196 in 1959. During the past year there were 51 new summer registrations, but 102 fewer new year-round borrowers. This may be due to the change-over in Navy personnel who remain on the Island two years. Subscription cards were issued to 251 persons this summer, netting the library \$502. These cards are issued to non-resident, non-taxpaying borrowers.

A total of 1,030 volumes were added to the Atheneum this year — 315 in adult fiction, 168 juvenile, and 547 in adult non-fiction. Many of these books, especially in non-fiction, came to the library as gifts. Gifts of newer and cleaner copies made it possible to discard soiled and out-of-date volumes. In all, 742 volumes were discarded.

Work with school pupils is an important part of the year's program. Classes of high school students were brought to the library for instruction in the use of the card catalog, the classification of books, the use of reference tools, and the arrangement of books on the library shelves. One class of sixth graders came to the Atheneum for instruction this fall. Classes of junior and senior high students will be conducted again this year. It is important that every school pupil should have at least one lecture on the use of such library facilities as are standard practice in public and college libraries. High school students were assisted in collecting material for their research papers, and in the preparation of their bibliographies.

It would be impossible to mention all the names of those who gave books to the Atheneum during the year, but

a record of these donors is kept in the library. A total of 818 volumes was received. This included many valuable additions that could not have been purchased out of the library's limited budget.

An outstanding gift was a collection of 125 volumes given by Mrs. Everett U. Crosby. This included works on silverware, pewter, pottery and porcelain, antiques, architecture — volumes that had been obtained at great cost and effort for Mr. Crosby's library. In a location where antique objects are so very important this collection is of inestimable value.

The project of the Nantucket Artists Association — which is to add needed volumes to the art collection in the Atheneum — has been advanced this year with the addition of many fine volumes on art subjects. Members of the Association have contributed books from their own libraries to add to the collection. A large addition to this collection came from the library of Miss Elma Loines, who is also helping the library to provide adequate glass-enclosed cases for the more valuable volumes.

Our gratitude is extended to Miss Cora Stevens who enabled us to have a new top put on the charging desk, adding greatly to the appearance of the desk and providing an efficient working space.

The Atheneum was fortunate in being able to display, on loan from Mr. Robert M. Wagggaman, the Thomas Birch painting of Nantucket Harbor in early days. Also on loan is the half-model of a whale boat on the wall in the Children's Department, and the model of the whale-ship Logoda. Mr. Wagggaman has given the library two paintings by George Fish, whose studio was in this library building, and another painting by Elizabeth Coffin. Both artists belong to Nantucket's art history.

The library appreciates the many hours of volunteer work given during the year. Work in examining and checking the fiction collection has been done by Mrs. Lewis B. Jelleme and Mrs. O. A. Tupancy. The making of many catalog cards by Miss Jane Sullivan has been a very great help to the Atheneum.

The promise of the past year leads directly to the challenge of the coming year. Increased use calls for increased facilities. The ever-present need for newer and better material is more urgent each year. For example: last year's book on Algeria will be a history book next year; and books on space travel and facts about the planets may be just humorous reminders of how little we knew a few short years ago. It will be through books that we will keep our perspective — books that will remind us of the past, its problems, and its mistakes; books that will inform us of the present with its forward pace and, we hope, solutions to old problems. In the meantime there should be books for inspiration, for relaxation — with a look at adventure, love, and laughter. All this will be offered by the Atheneum for the coming year to the Island's own people, and to those who come to the Island for rest and relaxation. Our work is certainly important, and with the Proprietors, the Trustees, the Atheneum's friends, and the Staff all working together we can say next January: "We've had another good year."

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Jaynes Smith, Librarian.

Building To Be Razed But Century-Old Ovens To Be Preserved On Atheneum Park

They're cooking with gas now—for heating purposes, that is—in the building that houses Gladys Wood's realty office, but it wasn't too long ago that the savory aroma of fresh baked bread emanated from the huge brick ovens still located in the rear of the more than a century old structure.

Miss Wood herself recalls buying bread there more years ago than a lady like to remember. "It must have been back around 1922 or '23," she said with just a trace of nostalgia in her tone. "Mr. Bickerstaff was running the bakery then, but it had been a bakery long before he occupied the building."

Indeed it had! The history of the ancient structure, as recorded by W. Ripley Nelson, chairman of the Nantucket Historic Districts Commission, reveals that its days as a bakery began two years after

the Great Fire of 1846 when a man named Cook, appropriately enough, transferred his bake shop to the present site of the long-cooled ovens.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Cook built his bakery on a parcel of land which he bought from Peggy Glover and Susan Plumb who, together with other beneficiaries of the estate of Jethro Hussey, had divided the land bounded by the Atheneum, Oak Street, South Water Street and Pearl Street in accordance with an agreement filed September 29, 1809.

Early plans of the tract, which accompany the agreement contained in the town records, not only disclose the location of various buildings on the land, but also show the old wooden pump—cited in many deeds over a long period

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)
of years as being for the common use of the various owners of the land—standing then, as now, on the North side.

A later map, drawn to scale by S. H. Jenks Jr. to show the section of town destroyed by the Great Fire of July 18, 1846, includes the various buildings shown on the Hussey settlement plan of 1809, but gives no indication of any bakery being located at the site where Mr. Cook ultimately set up shop.

Available evidence indicates that it wasn't until 1848 that the baker began doing business at the Lower Pearl Street location. Town records reveal that he bought the site from the Hussey heirs in May of that year while in a newspaper dated September 5 he advertised the removal of his bakery "to a new building next East of the Atheneum."

Mr. Cook, apparently, had formerly been in business at another location and whether or not the ovens were moved to the present site or built with the building itself is a matter of conjecture. It is the ovens, however, in which Mr. Nelson and the Historic Districts Commission are primarily interested.

So much so, in fact, that in issuing a permit to raze the building in accordance with the Atheneum's plans for the development of a public garden-park, the Commission stipulated that the ovens be preserved and that plans for a suitable structure to house them be submitted as soon as possible.

Housing them is no little problem for the ovens, the last brick bake ovens on the Island to have been used commercially and from which came hardtack for the whaling ships, are a mammoth marvel of masonry. The central oven itself, bricked throughout and built with a shallow, 20-inch arch, measures ten feet, four inches deep and more than six feet wide.

Beneath the oven itself, of course, are king-size fire boxes and, set to one side, a bricked over recess where once hung a gigantic kettle for frying doughnuts. There have been, to be sure, a good many changes in the functions of the ovens since their installation—the chimney, for example, now carries off smoke from the gas heater—but they appear as sturdy as ever.

So, for that matter, do the iron doors with which they are hung. The condition of the kettle is something else again, but that's there too—embedded in brick and mortar which Miss Wood herself helped lay when she became a tenant of the building in 1934.

"It was just a mess when I came in here," she commented. "That old kettle was still in there and it was covered with rancid grease and dirt. We just bricked the whole thing right in and covered it with plaster. It was much easier to do it that way than to try and get it out."

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the ovens, aside from their historic past, is the fact that there are no visible flues leading from the fire boxes to the chimney. How smoke was channeled out of the fire boxes and into the chimney is a mystery unless the flues, like the kettle, have been bricked over in the passing years.

Maybe the wreckers will find the solution when they dismantle the shaky old structure which has housed them for the past 111 years.



The work of razing the old bakery has brought to view the old whitewashed brick ovens, which will be preserved as an exhibit in a suitable structure when the destruction of the building is completed.

Feb. 19, 1960

Half Dollar Dated 1868 Found In Razing Old Bakery

Edward E. Backus and his son, Edward, Jr., this week completed taking down the old wooden structure on the grounds of the Atheneum on Lower Pearl Street that formerly housed the real estate office of Miss Gladys Wood. Back in 1848 the building housed a bakery and the large brick ovens with a whitewashed front have been left intact and are the only visible signs left of its former glory as one of the leading bake shops on the island.

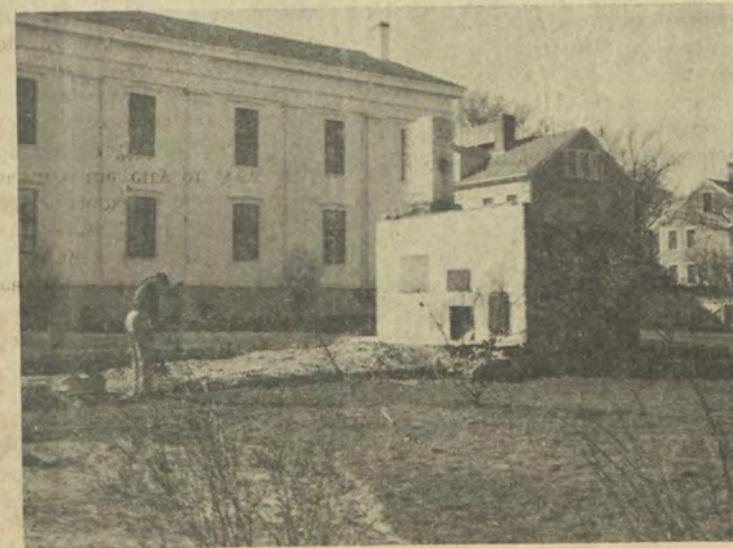
While in the process of removing the huge stones that formed the foundation for the structure, Edward, Jr., found an old half dollar that had been set in the foundation next to the cornerstone towards South Water Street. The half dollar was in excellent condition and bore the date, 1868. On its face it had a woman representing Liberty and on the back was an eagle with spread wings holding three arrows in one claw and a sheaf of grain in the other. The young man also found a eagle head penny which he gave away to a friend who collects old coins. Edward said he did

not notice the date on the penny before he gave it away.

Mr. Backus said he had to remove five large truck loads of rock from the foundation and that many of the stones were fire-blackened on one side which could mean that they must have been part of the foundation of a building that was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1846 and were used two years later when this building was constructed.

The ovens will remain as they are at the present time until the Atheneum Building Committee decides what will be done to preserve them. As President Lewis B. Jelleme is on vacation there will be nothing done until he returns. The Building Committee is composed of President Jelleme, Charles G. Snow, and Leroy H. True.

Mr. True said yesterday that the Nantucket Garden Club was to plant the area and that brick walks and benches would be put in for the benefit of the public who wished to sit and read or just rest. He said that any plans for housing the brick ovens as a historical relic would be subject to the approval of the Historic Districts Commission.



Nov. 27, 1959

Feb. 26, 1960

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 1962

*Atheneum Library Sets New Record With
A Book Circulation Of 40,383 In 1961*



The grounds of the Atheneum have been beautified with the planting of shrubs and trees and the construction of brick paths and a circle. Benches have been placed in the circle for the pleasure and relaxation of the public. The construction of the brick paths and circle and the planting of the shrubs and trees was made possible through the work and generosity of the Nantucket Garden Club. Mr. Henry Coffin Carlisle, donated the benches to the project.

July 29, 1960

Nantucket Atheneum Library set a new record with a circulation of 40,383 books in 1961, according to the annual report of Mrs. Irene L. Smith, librarian, to the library proprietors.

Mrs. Smith reported a gain of 90 resident adult circulation, the largest gain in the circulation of children's books recorded.

Book additions to the library, its cooperation with the schools in making use of its facilities, physical changes in the interior and the increasing need for space are among the matters dealt with by Mrs. Smith in her report which follows:

Last year for the first time in its history book circulation at the Nantucket Atheneum reached the 40,000 mark. There was a gain of more than 2,000 in resident adult circulation and the largest gain in the circulation of children's books. A decrease appeared in the use of the library by Summer visitors, which may be explained by the large sale of paperback books on the Island during the Summer.

"The circulation record shows that the library is being used by more Nantucket people, and especially by Nantucket children. A further proof of the children's use of the library can be seen in the need for 15 new chairs recently purchased for the children's department. It had been necessary on occasion to bring down from the Hall chairs to accommodate the young people. Total circulation for 1961 was 40,383 volumes. Of these 28,658 were resident and 11,725 non-resident. There were 11,824 children's books borrowed from the library during the year.

"In registration there were increases in the number of cards issued to Nantucket residents and in the renewal of Summer resident cards. Subscription cards were issued to 238 persons, a decrease of 13 over the previous Summer's record. Total registration for the year was 1,186.

"Books added during 1961 totaled 1,248 volumes. Of these 394 were adult fiction, 533 adult non-fiction, and 321 children's books.

^a number of very useful volumes

of reference were added: among them, The Statesman's Yearbook for 1961-62, Sargent's Handbook of Private Schools, Short Story Index with Supplements, Life's Pictorial Atlas of the World, Ewen's Living Musicians, and the latest edition of the World Book Encyclopedia. These volumes are very expensive but are a necessary addition to an up-to-date library.

"Our regular program of work with the schools has been followed this past year. Classes of Junior High school students were brought to the Atheneum for instruction in the use of the library, the workings of the card catalog, the classification of books, and the arrangement of books on the library shelves. Every Nantucket school child should have at least one lesson on library science so that he will be able to consult the library at home or away at school.

"Gifts amounting to 552 volumes were entered in the book of donors for the past year. This does not include the quantities of paperback books and magazines that have been generously donated by interested persons. It also does not include the many gifts of money received, designated for the purchase of more books, given by Summer visitors who write complimentary things about the library, and express their appreciation in a contribution.

"An important change was made in the 'Great Hall' this past year. The rows of metal shelving, serviceable but ugly, were replaced by wooden bookcases, half of which have glass doors that can be locked. These cases were painted white to match the wood-work of the room, with tops stained in a natural finish. The locked cases provide dust-proof housing for the Atheneum's many special collections—the Austin Strong Collection of books on ships and the sea, the Everett U. Crosby collections of modern art literature and books on antiques and silver, the Emma Loines collection of books on the China Trade, and the beautifully bound volumes received from the Frederick C. Sanford library.

"A special case has been built to house the recently acquired Louis S. Davidson collection of photographs of Nantucket personalities. This collection has grown to 15 volumes of portraits, all of which are indexed and are easily available.

"As the Atheneum increases its usefulness a need for newer and

larger facilities becomes apparent. One first need has been obtained this year. New chairs and tables of the right size and height have been purchased for the children. These replace makeshift tables put together with metal piping and plywood, made by the Coffin School to help out in an emergency. The new furniture is standard equipment for schools with sturdy, posture back chairs.

"The question of space is becoming an urgent problem—space for books in an ever-widening range of subjects, and space for students of all grades, scholars who wish a quiet place in which to work, and readers who are pushed out of the way by the scores of school children in the after-school hours. Room for the school children from grades one through six presents a problem that needs study and attention in the near future. An ideal arrangement that has been used in libraries all over the country is to open up a room in the basement with a separate outside entrance. It would seem that such a room might easily be included in plans for the use of the basement.

"The need for an adequate vault to receive the Atheneum's rare and valuable books has long been felt. Plans have been drawn up to provide a vault, built into the basement, which would be large enough to hold the library's valuable books and papers as well as the bound newspapers for many years to come. The present library safe is overcrowded with three rows of books on some of the shelves. Many persons would feel happier if the library's file of Nantucket newspapers, dating from the early 1800s, were safe from the chance of fire.

"The importance of books to a community has often been stated. Wendell Willkie once said that in forming an opinion of a town he first visited its public library. Books are of course an essential need in a town's educational program, for those out of school as well as in. Books will change the reader's viewpoint in every field and widen his horizon. The value of books and reading in a community's recreational program is not often considered. Many administrators will approve thousands of dollars for parks and playgrounds and ignore a plea for more money for library books. Nevertheless, it is a fact that reading is the No. 1 recreational activity, because it furnishes recreation for every age group and is not limited by physical condition. A dollar spent for books and reading serves many times over, and it also pays good dividends through well-informed citizens. Nantucket is fortunate in having proprietors of its library who recognize the importance of their proprietorship."

